

A CHINA SHEPHERDESS

By MARGARET T. APPLGARTH



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A china shepherdess

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By
MARGARET T. APPLGARTH



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Sometimes people write books and other people do not know how to use them. That is always such a pity! For there is so much more to do with a book than just to read it and then put it away on a shelf. Had you thought that perhaps somebody else would like to hear about it on special occasions in your church and Sunday school?

You will see that the China Shepherdess has given you some hints about when her stories can be told, and the drawings in each chapter will give still other hints!



HAND-DECORATED CHINA

Once upon a time there was a Committee Meeting. Among those present were: Mr. Glue Pot, presiding; Mr. Ink Bottle, Miss Scissors, Mrs. Pencil, Miss Pen, and various connections of the Paper Family—such as little Pasteboard Pieces and their cousin Colored Cardboard, also the Box Brothers, and Miss Book.

Said Chairman Glue Pot (unsealing his lips), “Will the meeting please come to order. Ladies and gentlemen, we are met to listen to a report from Miss Book.”

Said Miss Book (opening her jacket and turning her leaves): “Dear friends, as you know, I am about to tour the country to tell the adventures of a certain China Shepherdess to young people, to boys and girls, to leaders and to teachers. It seems to me it would be the greatest help if these various readers, in home or school, could have object lessons to make China seem more real to them: *hand-decorated* China, as it were.”

Said Mr. Ink Bottle (politely raising his lid), "Madam, as we stand on the brINK of sending you out into the world, I shrINK from being the first to speak, yet I herewith gladly shed every drop of my life's blood to help your various Chinese dolls to prINK and wINK and bLINK."

Said Miss Pen, "And I can thINK of no higher task than to sINK myself in that spilled INK and—*make faces!*"

Said Miss Scissors (cuttingly), "There are those who call me a great cut-up, but I hereby promise to cut out all houses, pagodas, Blue Belles, buffaloes, dragons, pedlers, and wheelbarrows."

Said Mr. Glue Pot (with sticky devotion), "And I hope I'm not too stuck-up to join together what you have put asunder!"

Said the Box Brothers (with hollow pathos), "Our lives have been so empty lately that if you can use any of us, thin or fat, we shall be filled with gratitude."

Said the Paper Family in a chorus, "You cover us with confusion! For what good is ink, or glue, or scissors, or boxes, if somebody doesn't move that we be laid on the table?"

And instantly everybody "moved": moved right on top of the paper, with the following results in hand-decorated China—



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* The author gratefully acknowledges permission to adapt the two starred stories which appeared originally in "Everyland."

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If you are going to tell the stories in this book to somebody else, then it will be really a great deal of fun to make the various houses and characters suggested in the drawings; that is one reason why the lines have been made so awkwardly simple, so that you will not be afraid to try copying them yourself. (The other reason, alas, is that I really *can't* draw any better!)

Cynthia's Dresden China Shepherdess was made of very brittle bisque, no doubt; but you can make a charming little shepherdess of your own by dressing a small doll like this Miss Bo-Peep; or you can draw one on cardboard and cut it out.

THE PROVERBS:

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."

"The sea is not worn by ships, nor is a road ruined by travel."

"Good words are like a string of pearls."

I

ENTER THE CHINA SHEPHERDESS

CYNTHIA is really very nice, and you are going to like her immensely before you get through with this book, I hope. It is possible that we ought to be calling her Miss Drummond so that you can fully realize that when this story opened she was a young lady in long skirts (but not too long, of course) with her hair done up in a lovely knot at the nape of her neck. Also—in case you ever need to remember it—she had graduated from college with high honors. But in spite of skirts and knots and honors somehow you cannot call Cynthia “Miss Drummond”; the minute you do, she stops being Cynthia! Half the gold stops sparkling in her hair, half the violet color drops from her violet-gray eyes at the very first syllable “Drum——” Oh, much-too-heavy a name, when Cynthia herself is light like the wind and the waves and the dear spring flowers and the saucy spring breezes.

Now it happened on the day when Cynthia was starting on a trip around the world that she was

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packing her trunks and trying her best to squeeze a certain package into a corner where there was no room for it.

"It won't go in," she sighed.

"Sit on it!" suggested a voice from the other room.

"I have," Cynthia answered. "I've sat and sat and sat. But she won't be wedged down, so I'll just have to leave her home. Anyhow, it's perfectly silly to cart a foolish little Dresden China Shepherdess all around the world! I'll just leave her bowing and scraping to her little Mr. Dresden China Shepherd on the other corner of the mantle."

"Oh but, Cyn dear, you must take the shepherdess, you simply must! She's your mascot—she looks exactly as you looked when you were Miss Bo-Peep in the senior play, and when the girls in the cast gave her to you you vowed that never you twain should part! Squeeze her in somehow, Cyn; if you don't have a mascot along how'll you ever get home safely?"

"Then join me on the lid, darling!" Cynthia called. And with a double weight on top of her the shepherdess obligingly sank face downward into darkness. The trunk was locked; which left

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the Dresden china shepherd with a very cold bleak look in his blue china eye, for nothing could be more forlorn than to keep holding a china hand over a china heart as he china-gazed at—nothingness!

But you need not waste sympathy on him, being merely a doll; for there was Cynthia's flesh-and-blood family holding what her young brother called "Handkerchief Day," as they wiped their eyes and listened for that gay little voice which was not to be heard for so long.

"Now she's in San Francisco——"

"Now she's going on board the steamer——"

"It's noon! The steamer's off! Oh, I do hope she wont be sick."

Cynthia was hoping this also, for it was very, very rough.

"I thought you told me this ocean was called the Pacific!" she complained to the Second Officer with a disappointed look in her violet-gray eyes. "When I went to school pacific meant peaceful, but look at those waves! Just look at them!"

The Second Officer looked. He was very sorry the way they forced such a good ship to knock down stars with her bow and stir up the sea-bed

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with her stern. But being only the Second Mate there was not much that he could do, although he promised very faithfully to report her complaint to the Captain.

“Oh, thank you,” Cynthia cried gratefully, “then I’m sure this won’t happen again!”

And curiously enough, it didn’t! For there were quiet blue waves ever after, with the sea quite like blue *crêpe* paper. Cynthia paced the deck for hours at a time and hated to go indoors to eat or to sleep. But one day she heard singing. It was a hymn.

“But this isn’t Sunday, is it?” she asked in a very bewildered fashion, for it is amazing how Tuesday and Friday and Sunday can seem so exactly alike when there is day after day after day of crinkling blue waves and more sky than could be seen in any town.

“No, it isn’t Sunday, it’s missionaries!” her friends explained.

Now Cynthia had known a missionary once. A large and jolly man from the very middle of some desert, and she had always wished that her particular home town had not been so small and unimportant, for otherwise he might have come back to tell more about Arabs and camels and

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sand-storms. She wondered if by any chance this particular hero might be one of the singers below deck.

"I'm going to see!" she exclaimed.

"What? On this grand afternoon?" every one cried protestingly.

"There'll be tomorrow," Cynthia twinkled recklessly as she hurried to the meeting, only to receive the shock of her life! For instead of the Large Man From The Desert there was the littlest Plain Gray Lady you ever saw.

So little, so plain, and so gray that Cynthia wondered she had not been blown overboard during the terrific two days' gale. "I think I'll not stay to hear any one so plain and gray," said Cynthia to herself, and was about to rush back to the sunshine again when the Little Plain Gray Person uttered one sentence so utterly surprising that Cynthia really had to linger to hear the next sentence.

For imagine any unknown little lady saying calmly, "What I need more than any other one thing in the world is a new china shepherdess."

Well!

Cynthia sat down on a back seat instantly, in order to hear the rest of this amazing desire.

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"The trouble with me is," sighed the Plain Gray Lady, "I find myself too popular! I'm always a lady in haste. There ought to have been two of me, or maybe even three! For I have my school to teach, and that's my real work. I've had it for twenty years now, such a nice little Chinese school with green tile roofs tipping up at the corners—a little school brimful to the very door-jambs with girls in blue cotton jackets and trousers. They even overflow the door-jambs out into my hallways. I can't send home any little blue-cotton pupils, they're so stupid and so eager and so precious when they come, then in a few years' time they turn out to be so wise and so useful and so doubly precious. All my life I seem to have been turning stupid blue-cotton pupils into bright blue-cotton pupils! It's a career in itself. The 'Real Me' never wants to give it up; never!"

"You are an adorably Plain Gray Full-of-fun Darling!" Cynthia smiled to herself. "Blue-cotton pupils, indeed! What a jolly way to talk; it beats the Man From The Desert." And of course she continued to sit on the back seat listening for the shepherdess part of the story.

"But what am I to do, being so popular?"

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laughed the Plain Gray Lady. "For there's my school full to the brim, every blessed girl needing to know everything from alphabets to tooth-brushes. And these blue-cotton pupils have mothers. One by one these mothers invite me to come and sit in their house; or if they fail to invite me, I feel that it is all the more urgent to go of my own accord. Although I may seem very little to you, in their eyes I am satisfactorily big and important. I settle things! I settle about the row of idols on the godshelf—what to do with them when the family becomes Christian. I settle about the pig. He is so precious. Wealth, on four feet! Why, oh, why do I object to his sleeping under the bed? I speak of disease germs and uncleanness. We talk for hours of pigs and baths, and somehow or other this always ends up with my strange 'save-the-world-doctrine.' They are so curious about it! I want them to be curious! That's what I came to China for, to make people curious about Christ. It's kept me there for twenty years, it's taken all my spare moments, and always bedtime comes before I have seen half the people needing me that day. Oh, if there could only be two of me, so that one could teach arithmetic and Bible in my green-

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tilled school while the other visited the little crooked houses on the little crooked streets. 'Go slowly! Go slowly!' they say to me with their Chinese politeness when I bow myself away from their thresholds. Indeed, I get quite flustered by so much hospitality, for little plain gray spinsters become heavy-hearted when they never finish half their work. With so many lost sheep, surely you see how I need a new China Shepherdess?"

Cynthia squirmed uneasily. "Oh, it's not a china China Shepherdess she wants but a human China Shepherdess! Well, that sets me free! I thought maybe I'd have to part with my nice little mascot. But I'm safe!"

But of course you can see that this did not set Cynthia free, by any manner of means. Neither was she safe. Not a bit of it! For the little thought came creeping into her mind that once upon a time she had made the beguilingest kind of a Miss Bo-Peep whose specialty had been lost sheep——

"Oh dear, why did I ever come to this meeting? And why am I thinking all this about myself? She doesn't mean me! Of course she doesn't. She never saw me before. She doesn't

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even dream I'm in the room now." (But that was not true, for no one could possibly overlook Cynthia in any room!) "And I don't believe in missions anyhow. At least, not much! Those people have their own gods."

Indeed they did have their own gods! The Plain Gray Lady was telling things about them. Rather horrid, awful things. Cynthia felt sorry to be hearing such things.

"When I see these idols of China," sighed the Plain Gray Lady in closing, "then how I do wish there were three of me, for one of me would do nothing but haunt the temples and the little wayside shrines to tell the disappointed worshipers my wonderfully good news—a God touched with every feeling of their infirmities! This always surprises them so much, for they really do have infirmities in China—appalling ones! Indeed, if there could only be four of me, I'd be a doctor, too."

Then everybody had to laugh at this amazing little lady. So small, and yet so eager to be four others! It was quite evident that the audience loved her. Cynthia loved her, too. She loved her so much that she said fiercely: "I'd like to have the kind of medals they pin on soldiers for

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valor. I'd pin them all over her! I'd kiss her on both cheeks, like Papa Joffre! The brave little, dear little, tired little heroine! Always snowed under with work. And so old! Surely she ought to be knitting by somebody's fireplace with a cozy old tabby-cat purring beside her."

Since she had no medals and no fireplace and no cat, Cynthia rushed up on deck and marched round it and round it and round it, rather savagely. Her lovely violet-gray eyes looked positively black.

"Just the same, I don't believe in missions!" she said to the blue waves.

The blue waves were making white caps here and there, entirely unconcerned. "Oh! don't you?" they seemed to chuckle, and went right on making white caps. So the girl who owned a china China Shepherdess went down to her little cabin to dress for dinner, muttering crossly, "A perfect waste of money!"

But that was at night.



You can plainly see that a Chinese wheelbarrow is an entirely different affair from any ever seen in America. Even this picture is not so complicated as it should be, because it has been drawn simpler on purpose to show you how you can make one for yourself from a narrow tan box lid, a circle of tan cardboard for a wheel, and a few toothpicks for the curious arch-like frame over the wheel. (This can be omitted if too difficult.) Slit the seat smoothly along the center of the box lid and wedge the wheel through the slit. Thread a needle with a piece of string, double it, and tie the two ends together into as big a knot as possible. Then (1) at the spot marked X on the wheelbarrow seat poke your needle through; (2) next sew through the hub of the wheel, once; (3) bring the thread through the seat on the other side corresponding to X, and tie another big knot. Cut away the back part of the lid leaving only handle-bars. For the coolie use pedler pattern in Chapter XVIII; and for the long line of school-less girls use Blue Belles from Chapter IX.

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"For every pair of bound feet there is a bed of tears."

"If you don't scale the mountain you can't see the view."

"The summer insect cannot speak of ice; the frog in the bottom of the well should not talk of the heavens."

II

BECAUSE THE GOLDEN LILIES PINCHED

CYNTHIA felt quite differently when she woke up in the morning, stiff and cramped, with her feet hurting her in a truly agonizing fashion. Peculiar! She couldn't imagine what ailed them; she rolled over in bed and found to her amazement that she was lying on bricks—bricks? She touched them experimentally. Yes, bricks! Rather like a shelf it seemed. Of all puzzling things—how did she ever get there? She climbed down, but began at once to wince and whimper with pain.

“'Sh!” said somebody who seemed to be her grandmother, reaching for a switch that seemed only too ready-to-use, “don't say that again, you'll wake everybody, you provoking young baggage! Back to bed with you at once,” and there came the sudden stinging switch of the switch on her arms.

She was never so surprised in her life! Who was this amazing old grandmother-person? And

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why was she being treated like a little, little girl? A dozen sentences rushed to her lips at once, but what she actually found herself gasping as she tottered away from the energetic old lady, was: "O Venerably Aged, I really didn't say a word! Really I didn't, Honorably August!" (This seemed a strange way to address anybody; she pinched her arm to be sure that she was properly awake. She was.)

"Tut! Tut!" grumbled Granny. "All night long haven't you been babbling that something was a perfect waste of money, and now you're talking again, you miserable cry-baby! Stop it, I say!" And there was another crack of the switch, sharp, quick, stinging.

Cynthia gasped again: "Oh, please! Please, Respected One, I'm not a cry-baby, but my feet—my feet—they hurt me so terribly, they feel like pounded jelly."

"Of course they do, you foolish little idiot. Just like all the rest of us you're proving the truth of the proverb that 'for every pair of golden lilies there's a bed of tears.' Well, did you suppose your golden lilies were going to be any different from anybody's else? Get back into bed!"

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“ But I can’t see any bed to get back into, and I h-haven’t any g-golden l-lilies. Oh dear! Oh dear! whatever makes everything seem so peculiar? ”

What indeed?

For by this time she had awakened the entire household; there stood Grandfather blinking solemnly through his big horn glasses; there stood the Fat Uncle with his curving fierce mustache draping his lips; there stood the Thin Uncle who looked so very cross, and the Deaf Uncle who thunderingly demanded to know what this worm of a she-child meant by awaking everybody at daybreak.

“ It’s her golden lilies,” shouted Grandmother loudly into the ears of this, her eldest son.

“ La! La! ” shrugged the various sleepy aunts and cousins, “ is that all? What did the little goose expect to feel, anyhow? She ought to have had them bound years and years ago.”

Them? Bound?

Cynthia glanced down at her feet and gasped with surprise at the astonishing thing she saw—trousers! Blue-cotton trousers! And peeping out from under the trousers the most absurdly awful little feet, just a few inches long, bound

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round and round with tight deforming bandages. A curious sudden notion popped into her brain and from there to her lips.

“Am I—am I—C-Chinese?” she managed to stutter, but even as she said it she knew the words weren’t English at all. She was actually speaking and understanding another tongue entirely.

There was a thick silence. It seemed to last for hours and hours. Then came Grandfather’s voice booming through the dusky stillness: “A demon has certainly stolen the child’s wits away.”

“She’s been babbling strangely all night long,” sighed Grandmother. “It’s the pain. We’ve all been through it.”

“You never heard *me* ask who I was, though!” sneered the Top-Lofty Aunt whose feet were smaller than the smallest mouse you ever saw. The Changs boasted about those feet!

“The girl’s not worth her rice,” grunted the Sour Aunt. (Her feet, alas, were unfashionably large. Fully four inches long!)

“She never has been worth her rice, stupid creature. However, since we’re all up, I suppose the thing to do is to have her make the morning offering to the kitchen god and then get us our ‘early rice.’ Hurry up, slow-poke!”

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Cynthia was forced to hobble painfully to the strangest-looking stove. Sleepy yawning aunts stood over her giving her weary directions.

“Put the god in a good humor first, you silly!”

“But I don’t see any—god,” Cynthia breathed frantically, clasping her hands in dismay. Mercy on us, did these outrageous women think that she was going to kneel down and worship a heathen idol? Not she! Why she was a Sunday-school-goer! She had been president of her college Y. W. C. A.! She knew the Ten Commandments by heart, and the first of those commandments especially and clearly said that——

But rude hands were poking her in the back, shoving her forward, forcing her down on her unwilling knees. Her forehead actually bumped the floor, and what was this gibberish she was muttering?

*Come God of the Kitchen,
O Grandfather Chang!
Come, here is your pudding
And here is your t'ang.
Go fly up to heaven
Be gone in a trice,
Forget all the bad
And tell only what's nice.¹*

¹ Translated by Isaac T. Headland.

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Evidently it had been an offering of food she had laid before the paper picture on the wall over the stove.

“Oh! Oh! Oh!” wailed Cynthia, scrambling to her feet, horror-stricken. “You’ve made me break a commandment. Oh! Oh! Oh!” And she cried such gallons of tears that she could not see the rice or the rice-pots or the chop-sticks—or anything else, for that matter.

“Commandment?” echoed the aunts.

“Y-yes, don’t you remember reading in Exodus, the twentieth chapter, how God wrote _____”

“Reading?” echoed the aunts.

“The poor girl is out of her wits,” sighed Grandmother, “for who ever heard of a woman reading?”

Who indeed?

Cynthia began to think that she really had lost her wits. For things got “curiouser and curiouser” all day long, as Alice once said in Wonderland. For Cynthia never fully comprehended what her family meant, and they were far from understanding her amazing stupidity about the simplest events of life. For instance, in the middle of the afternoon, when she

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stood near the table waiting for the men and boys in the family to eat their "late rice," she was mortified to see Grandfather throw his chicken bone on the floor when he was through with it. Then the Fat Uncle did the same untidy thing! And as for the boy cousins who ate so noisily, they, too, seemed to think that the floor was the only place for the remains of food.

"Don't!" ordered Cynthia in scandalized disgust.

But Grandmother boxed her ears so soundly for this shocking unheard-of rudeness to these lordly elders, that Cynthia decided she really could not stand the life in this gloomy peculiar house another minute. She hobbled painfully and secretly through one door, down a narrow passage to another door, then through it to the gate. Ah, the street! And freedom.

She hobbled along as fast as she could through the mud. What unusual roofs the houses had—they tipped up at the corners. She liked them, but they made her homesick for the rounded gables of a certain small white house so different from this topsy-turvy world in which she found herself at present. She could hardly believe that she was she! And then suddenly, clearly, she

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heard voices singing. Oh, it was a clear song, a dear song—

*Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near.*

“It’s Christians! Christians!” Cynthia smiled, and danced eagerly toward the sound, forgetting her bound feet, forgetting everything but the bliss of reaching some one who would understand her at last.

But would you believe it?

Just as she was about to rush in excitedly, a woman—a sweet little Plain Gray Lady, lovely to look at—barred the doorway entirely: “Don’t you dare come in! You don’t believe in missions! If you had your way, you wouldn’t let us have even this small roof-tree for our own. You say it is a perfect waste of money! Oh, no, I really couldn’t let you in, for there’s happiness inside here, and you mustn’t interrupt us. You really, really mustn’t. Go away! Go, go!”

“But where else can I go?” Cynthia wailed in a small tired voice, for it looked so jolly inside. Just a tiny little place, but such a shiny little place, with its tidy blackboard and its rows of smiling blue-clad children—their prim blue-

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trousered legs hung down so quaintly from the grown-up chairs. (" Mine would, too! Just like that," thought the little Cynthia wistfully, before that closed door.)

" You can go straight to bed! " ordered the Fat Uncle puffing and blowing as he caught up with her and dragged her back to the House-with-the-Red-Tipped-Up-Roof.

" Oh, so this is the bed, is it? " Cynthia asked as she deposited herself on the brick *kang* again.

" Keep still! " roared the Fat Uncle.

She did.

But she thought all the harder. About this sudden business of being Chinese: you had your feet bound, which certainly was unhealthy; you worshiped an idol, which certainly was unchristian; you could not read or write, which certainly was uneducated; you dropped your chicken bones and vegetable parings on the floor, which certainly was untidy and unsanitary.

And all the time there was that one tiny shiny house in town with children singing hymns. Oh, if only she could have gotten indoors——

" It's a perfect waste of money! " a voice which seemed to be her own American voice was saying.

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“No! No! No!” cried her Chinese voice as she banged her golden lilies on the hard brick *kang* in protest at herself, until she felt the well-known flick of Grandmother’s switch on her arm. She cowered into the quilt and pretended to sleep like twenty sound sleepers. Then, when she felt sure that she was forgotten, she stealthily, quietly sat up in bed; she stealthily, quietly slipped off the *kang*; stealthily, quietly tiptoed through the network of doors and passages to the kitchen. She snatched some beans, some rice, a chicken wing; she wrapped them in a piece of cloth and tiptoed through the outer gateway to the street.

“I’ll find another place where Christians have a school,” she whispered to herself. But she trudged all over town, from East Gate to West Gate, from North Gate to South Gate, and there was no other mission school. Not one!

“Oh, that’s too bad!” she sighed, not only for herself but because the town was big, and the only mission school was such a tiny, shiny little place, not nearly big enough. And then she saw a man with a wheelbarrow. The kind you ride in, if you are Chinese. She bowed to him politely, as you do bow, if you are Chinese, and asked him if he could honorably condescend to

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carry such a trifling nuisance as herself to the next town in his wheelbarrow. She bowed again as engagingly as she knew how, and said if it weren't for her golden lilies she could walk, of course, but they were so painful and so ridiculously useless.

"Don't use up the air in such flights of foolish gabbling," he said in a very brusque fashion. "Why should you want to go to the next town?"

"Because there'll be a school in the next town and I want to finish my education. Don't you know of a school in the next town where girls learn to read and write and multiply and subtract and parse and locate cities and *parlez-vous français?*"

"It can't be done!" he said in his blunt way.

"Oh, yes it can!" she almost answered, and then very wisely changed into far more flowery speech: "Permit me modestly to differ from your exalted words of wisdom, Honorable Sir, for it can be done! It has been done! Insignificant as I doubtless seem to you, I, even I, can read and write and multiply and subtract and locate cities and parse and *parlez-vous français.*"

"A demon has stolen the maid's wits!" the man exclaimed—a bit nervously, too.

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But Cynthia had an inspiration. Something told her to hop up on his wheelbarrow. She hopped. "And now, if you will deign to bring me something to read, I'll read it for you," she promised, "but I'll not budge from this wheelbarrow in any case until we reach the nearest town where there's a girl's school."

Now the man had no books or newspapers or advertisements or letters or time-tables or anything of that sort on hand, for the simple reason, first, that he could not read a single word himself, and, second, because there were no newspapers or advertisements or time-tables in all that town. Not one. But there was Cynthia. And there was also his wheelbarrow. Inseparable, apparently!

So, with a sigh, he started trundling her up-hill and down-hill. Up-hill and down-hill. Up-hill and down-hill. They went and they went, but they never seemed to get anywhere. Cynthia wished the wheelbarrow did not squeak so.

"Do you think that if you pressed a bean into the works that the oil in the bean might stop the squeak?" she inquired politely, and opened her bundle to get the bean. (I can't imagine how she knew that beans had oil in them, can you?)

BECAUSE THE GOLDEN LILIES PINCHED

"The bean is more likely to stop the squeak in me," said the man and popped it between his lips.

"Perhaps you would like another," Cynthia smiled, for, after all, he was being very kind, and it certainly was a long ride. She held out her bundle toward him.

I am sorry to say that he helped himself generously to everything. All the beans. All the rice. All the chicken wing. It made Cynthia's mouth water to hear him chew it with such gusto.

"There doesn't seem to be much left for me," she announced gently.

"No, but *you're* left!" said the man, with a scowl, and started trundling her once more, up-hill and down-hill, up-hill and down-hill. And, of course, the unpleasant squeak in the wheels was as bad as ever. It sang a little tune. A really horrid little tune. Monotonous. Hateful. This is what it said: "A perfect waste of money! A perfect waste of money!"

It made the trip seem longer than ever.

"Aren't we nearly there?" she asked.

"No, we aren't," said the man, and the veins in his forehead stood out like ropes, from the effort he had to make in pushing her up-hill.

"Anyhow China's a very pretty country, sir,"

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Cynthia remarked courteously, just to make conversation. She pointed at the flaming banks of azaleas and the lovely purple hills ahead.

"Is it?" asked the man. And the veins that had been like ropes grew bigger than ever. Like cables.

"He is getting very tired," Cynthia whispered to herself. Aloud she finally ventured to say once more: "I can hardly wait another minute! Aren't we really almost there?"

"No, we aren't," snapped the man crossly. "I thought you understood when you started out that schools for girls are so few and far between in China that half the population never even hear of them. I know, of course. Maybe I didn't look as if I knew when you first spoke to me. But I did."

"I'm sure you did," said Cynthia soothingly, and gently, for the veins which had been like cables grew larger in size. Like pipes.

On and on and on and on they went, while the abominable wheels kept squeaking at her: "A per-fect w-waste of m-money? Oh, nev-er! No! No! No!" It began to sound like the thud of feet. Oh, surely it was the thud of feet. Cynthia turned her head, and there—all up and down

BECAUSE THE GOLDEN LILIES PINCHED

the hills and valleys in the road along which they had come—was a procession of Chinese girls. Blue-cotton trousered girls, trudging, trudging, trudging, each with her bundle of beans and rice for a journey.

“Oh, look!” cried Cynthia. “Just look who’s behind you, sir.”

“I know,” said the man. “Haven’t I been pulling them along the entire route, Miss Stupid? Isn’t that the reason why we’re so behind the times—lagging while these girls caught up with you? I’ve had to pull them and pull them and pull them to keep up their spirits. They think it’s a hopeless excursion. But I’m determined that if you are going to get an education they’re going to get one, too. Why not? They’re every bit as good as you!”

“Are they?” asked Cynthia, squirming around in her seat until she sat riding backward to admire their darling rose-leaf cheeks, their lovely slant eyes—some mischievous, some anxious, all eager.

“Oh, I love them!” she cried. “I love every blessed one of them! And look how they stretch like a soft blue ribbon from here way out to the horizon line, up-hill and down-hill like——”

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"We are here!" the man interrupted.

"Why, sure enough! So we are," she gasped, surprised that in thinking of others she had shortened her trip until she had really arrived at the school. A sign over its gateway read, "Heavenly—Education—Instilling School."

She stepped down from the wheelbarrow. "We are here at our school!" she said to the nearest girl, smiling.

"We are here at our school," the nearest girl said to the next nearest girl, who repeated it to the next nearest, and so it went buzzing the length of the line clear out to the dim horizon, until all down the hills and the valleys the sound of it rose like the murmur of bees: "Our school! Our school! We are here at our school!"

Cynthia loved it. She ran through the gateway and rang a bell. A teacher came. It was the same Plain Gray Lady-Teacher in the plain gray dress, with an Ingersoll watch on her wrist. The mere sight of such objects made Cynthia burst forth in English: "Oh, you'll never guess the funny funny time I've had in getting here! But now I've come——"

"Good gracious!" gasped the Plain Gray Lady, horror-stricken. "You're that awful girl

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who wants to shut our schools. You say they are a perfect waste of money. Go away from here at once. I don't think you ought to be allowed on the premises; we can't tell what you might do! Go away! Go away!" And would you believe it? She shut the door fast and bolted it safely against this terrible enemy.

And meanwhile the terrible enemy banged on the panels with one hand and pressed on the bell with the other: "Let me in!" she demanded. "I've changed my mind. Open the door and let me in. I take it all back, it isn't a waste of money at all, not when it means such adorable girls as these. Oh, open the door—open it! Open it! Open it! I'm as safe as a mouse. I'm as tame as a cat. I'm as nice as you please. Oh, open the door! Open the door!"

But the Plain Gray Lady inside had run to spread the horrible news: "There's a girl outside. She's the Girl-Who-Doesn't-Believe-In-Missions."

"That one? Oh, the mean old thing!" cried the blue-cotton pupils in terror. "Don't let her get at us; she may try to send us back home. She thinks we're a perfect waste of money. Don't listen, dear honorable teacher, we pray you!"

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“My darlings, you’re safe!” said the Plain Gray Lady, and they all stuffed their fingers in their ears.

But meanwhile Cynthia thumped on that door: “It’s not for myself that I’m asking!” she shouted. “It’s for all these dear Chinese girls. They’re so hot and so dusty and tired. They hardly dare believe that Chinese girls can learn to read—oh, let them in! Please let them in!”

But the door stayed shut. Tight shut.

She rang. She banged. She clanged. “Oh, if you once could see them with their little bundles in their arms and their faces all so eager and so anxious. Please let them in! Please! Please!

No answer.

But the very stillness seemed to echo down those hills and valleys where the ribbon-line of girls stood waiting wearily.

Cynthia pressed close against the panels, kissing them in a passion of unselfish longing: “O lovely doors, open! Open! These girls must all come in—please open!”

But the winds of heaven whispered through the treetops: “It was this girl herself who closed the doors. She said it was a perfect waste of money to have missions.”

BECAUSE THE 'GOLDEN LILIES' PINCHED

The little Chinese birds up in those treetops hid their heads beneath their Chinese wings for very shame. The flowers by the wayside drooped and died. And one by one the line of girls turned straight around and started homeward.

"It was all too good to be true!" their wail went sighing down the hills and valleys.

But Cynthia knelt on the doorstep: "What have I done? Oh, what have I done?" she cried, as the tramp of departing feet came thudding and padding into her ears. "How can I let them go home to worship some useless old god of the kitchen?"

"What's this about a kitchen, darling Cyn?" said a voice in her ear, as a kiss brought her to an upright position.

"Oh, you knock for me!" she begged this voice. "Knock, and tell the Plain Gray Lady to open the door and let the girls in. Quick! Quick! Don't be so slow or those girls will get home!"

"*Cynthia Drummond!* Are you crazy?" asked the voice. "What door? What girls?"

Cynthia opened her eyes. She saw a cool white cabin. She saw a small white berth. She saw an open port-hole. She heard the lapping of gentle waves against the side of a steamer. She saw

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her roommate looking at her with startled eyes. That long line of patiently waiting girls seemed to have vanished into the bright morning air like a dream, but Cynthia had an uncomfortable feeling that they were waiting for her somewhere—where was it, now? Where? Where?

She kissed her roommate, absentmindedly. She dressed quickly. She did not even wait for breakfast before finding the Plain Gray Lady.

“What sort of a China Shepherdess do you think I would be?” she asked anxiously.

The Plain Gray Lady smiled: “How should I know? But I’ve been praying all night that God would give me a chance to find out, for during my talk yesterday I grew to loving you more and more. But you looked so rebellious! I can’t help but wonder what has made you so eager now?”

“Mostly because I spent the night in another girl’s shoes, and her golden lilies pinched me! Then, too, every single detail of your talk became such stuff as dreams are made of. But strangest of all was the curious coincidence of your mentioning a China Shepherdess——”

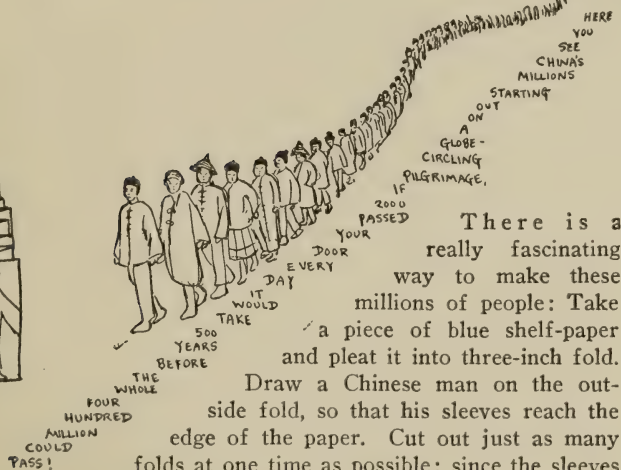
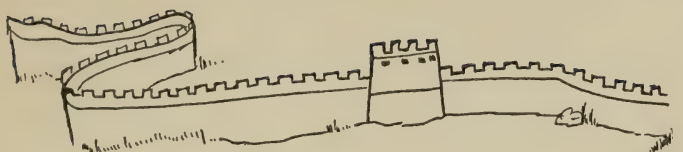
The Plain Gray Lady made her confession: “There’s nothing strange about that! For every time I pass your stateroom door I see her sitting

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on your table. So that it was the most natural inspiration in the world to speak of a shepherdess when you came wandering into my meeting yesterday and then started to wander out again so indifferently."

"I see! Well, life works out quite simply sometimes, doesn't it? Here I am with nothing whatever to do, and here you are with everything to do. If you think you could use me, I certainly want to be used."

You do not need to be told the answer, do you?



There is a really fascinating way to make these millions of people: Take a piece of blue shelf-paper and pleat it into three-inch fold.

Draw a Chinese man on the outside fold, so that his sleeves reach the edge of the paper. Cut out just as many folds at one time as possible; since the sleeves will be joined, the men will hold one another up, and by repeating your cut-outs a long line will stretch from the front to the back of a table, where a Chinese wall should be built, either of building blocks or of corrugated cardboard.

It would also be interesting to place on the table first two home-made maps, one of the United States, the other of China, and prove to everybody's satisfaction that if Pekin really sits down on Philadelphia the Eastern coast-lines of both countries will coincide.

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"Don't throw in your hook where there are no fish."

"Better return home and make a net than go down to the sea and desire great fishes."

"The large fish eat the small fish; the small fish eat the water insects; the water insects eat water plants and mud."

III

MISS MARCO POLO DISCOVERS CHINA

CYNTHIA was always being nicknamed—Cyn, Bo-Peep, the China Shepherdess; but the latest was Miss Marco Polo because she was about to discover China exactly as that ancient explorer had done back in the thirteenth century, only Cynthia's discoveries were made in a deck-chair on a steamer in mid-ocean with cheerful missionaries offering all the facts she ought to know.

"I'm afraid the only Polo about me will be this polo coat," she sighed, stroking her shaggy top-coat regretfully, "for it's shocking to have known the name 'China' all my life and yet to be so really ignorant about it."

"What do you know to begin with?" she was asked.

She knit her brows: "Well, only very sketchy facts, such as the yellow-skinned people, the famous Chinese wall, bound feet, sedan-chairs. Just things like that."

"Enough to begin on," the Plain Gray Lady assured her, "but I think one of us should volun-

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teer at once to teach this child Chinese geography?"

"I, I, sir!" laughed a volunteer.

"Anybody primed with history?"

"Here! Here!"

"Count on me!"

"We'll all chip in occasionally," the others added with such purpose in their voices that Cynthia rushed off to get a note-book.

"China, my child, is a very big land," the geography teacher began, in such a stiff school-marm fashion that Cynthia buried her head in her note-book and shook with laughter.

"Yes, ma'am," she finally said meekly, wiping her eyes, "just how big a land might it be, if you please?"

"As I was about to state when interrupted by your unseemly levity, if one should lay the United States plus Alaska on top of China there would be room enough left on the margins for a fringe of half a dozen Great Britains and Irelands."

"Thank you," Miss Marco Polo said, writing down, "Size of China = 1 United States + 1 Alaska + 6 Great Britains + 6 Irelands."

"Also, dear pupil, the east coast of China is shaped so much like the east coast of the United

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States that if you should lay a map of China on a map of the United States with Peking at its latitude of 39° on top of Philadelphia at *its* latitude of 39° the two outlines would correspond very neatly. Does this suggest anything to your geographical instincts?"

"It suggests climate," said the dear pupil brightly. "One climate like the other climate. And probably similar vegetation."

"Mark her 100!" gasped the remainder of the faculty.

"'Sh!" ordered the geography teacher sternly. "Correct, my child. Oranges, rice, and cotton, in the south; wheat, corn, and beans, in the north, as well as apples, peaches, pears, and grapes in season."

Miss Marco Polo scribbled hastily, as her teacher added: "Please note that China is divided into eighteen provinces, that it's a republic, and draw a little five-barred flag, the red stripe on top standing for the Chinese within China's republic, the yellow for the Manchus, the blue for the Mongolians, the white for the Tibetans, and the black for the Mohammedans."

"Next—population!" interrupted another professor reeling off statistics so fast that Cynthia's

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pencil point wore down to the wood as she tried to write everything down: "Four hundred million people in China = four times as many as the population of the United States, or = the population of the United States + Great Britain + Germany + Austria + France + Russia + Italy + a few other small countries."

"Too big!" gasped Cynthia. "I can't seem to grasp what that means."

"It means that one-fourth of all the human race is Chinese," explained the geography teacher.

"It means that every fourth baby in the world coos up into the face of a Chinese mother!" supplemented the Plain Gray Lady.

"It means, too, that every fourth bride is dressed in Chinese red."

"It means that every fourth person kneels before a Chinese joss."

"Oh, I see!" Cynthia nodded.

"Oh no, you don't," sighed her professor, "you couldn't live long enough to see them all! Suppose I formed them in rank joining hands, then those four hundred millions could girdle the globe at the equator *ten times over!* Or suppose I made them into pilgrims and let two thousand

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of them walk past you every day and every night—you'd hear their ceaseless tramp! tramp! tramp! for five hundred years!"

"No," Cynthia agreed solemnly, "I couldn't possibly live long enough. I really couldn't. But how you ever figured this out by yourself I simply cannot imagine."

"Thank you for thinking I could," her professor said gratefully, "but as a matter of fact, I cribbed all the facts from Doctor Gracey's little-great book called 'China In Outline,' he has a real genius for making figures live. You can't forget, the way he puts them. For instance, I remember he computed that the Chinese die at the rate of thirty-three thousand a day. He said it would be just as if we buried all the people in New York City in three months! Or all the people in the United States in less than four years! I was literally staggered when I read those figures. I don't mind telling you that they sent me straight to a medical college so that China could have at least one new doctor as soon as possible."

"And a mighty good doctor!" said the history professor as he took his turn in the teacher's chair. "Now that you've got the lay of the land

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and an inkling of the number of people, it's high time you began to be impressed about those people, little Miss Marco Polo."

"But I am impressed," this latest Chinese explorer insisted, "indelibly impressed."

"Possibly. But impressed with mere quantity. We now proceed to show you that quality goes hand in hand. As a slight comparison in antiquities, how long ago did the Pilgrims first settle in America?"

Cynthia subtracted hastily: "Three hundred and four years ago."

"Yes. But three hundred and four years is a mere nothing as the Chinese reckon time. Try again. America goes back to Christopher Columbus; how many years ago?"

"Four hundred and thirty-two years ago," answered the arithmetical explorer, hoping that this would be a date to match up well with China.

But no! "My child, when Columbus set foot on our crude rude shores, the Chinese were already such a highly civilized people that they had just completed a great canal 1,200 miles long, which is still in use today."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Miss Marco Polo.

Her professor enjoyed her surprise. "Yet

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even that is nothing compared to the fact that way back in the days when Abraham was traveling by camelback from Ur of the Chaldees, Chinese astronomers were recording observations which modern scientists find perfectly accurate. When Moses was leading the children of Israel through the Red Sea, China was 700 years old and had laws, literature, religion such as she has today. A hundred years before David wrote the Psalms, an emperor of China named Wung Wang was composing classics which Chinese scholars are still memorizing. A thousand years ago the Chinese were selling silk to the Romans who had no such fabrics of their own, while your ancestors and mine were savage Britons daubed with blue paint, fishing from tree-trunk canoes. China's great wall was built over two hundred years before Christ was born. The Chinese had invented a compass, fire-arms, gun-powder, printing-presses, and paper hundreds of years before our forefathers ever dreamed of such things. In fact, Chinese records reach backward through four thousand rich years of literature, fine arts, and everything else."

Miss Marco Polo had discovered far more than she expected. Her note-book dangled from

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one hand, her pencil from the other as she said in an awed voice: "But this is simply stupendous! How dare we little three-hundred-year-old Americans go to a land four-thousand-years-old with anything?"

Every one answered at once:

"They invented—but their religion never gave them enough 'push' to make the inventions count to the full."

"China has more coal and iron than all the rest of the world put together, but she has never dared mine it for fear of the dragon down under the earth. Tickle his ribs? Disturb his slumbers? No, never! So she freezes in winter."

"Half of the time the Chinese were afraid of their own inventions—beyond a certain point the gods would not be pleased to have mortals go."

"Custom! Age-old custom, the bane of China—'whatever grandfather did, do now!'"

"I see," Cynthia nodded. "And, if you please, I'd love to hear more about the famous wall, for I know it's one of the seven wonders of the world, without realizing why."

It was a fascinating story in itself, this tale of the Emperor Chin Shih Huang who began ruling when he was only thirteen years old. A born

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hustler, however, considering the things he accomplished in his life-time. Among other things, he was constantly annoyed by the wild Tartar tribes on the north who would come sweeping south destroying cities and towns on the way. Emperor Chin had an inspiration: he would build a wall and keep them out! And the wall should stretch from the ocean on the east to Tibet on the west. What matter if it needed to be fifteen thousand miles long? It is said that it took eight million men to build it, of brick and stone and lime. Up-hill and down-hill it stretches, anywhere from twenty to sixty feet high, and so wide that two carts can pass side by side on it, or six horsemen ride abreast. The Chinese call it the "Ten-thousand-li-Wall," and although it was built over two thousand years ago, it is still standing in almost perfect condition.

It was at this point that the Man-Who-Loved-Statistics offered another gem: "There's enough material in that wall to build a smaller wall six feet high around the entire globe!"

"If you keep on putting things around the globe I'll never get to China!" Cynthia warned him. "And my hat's off to your Mr. Chin! I suppose China was named for him?"

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“It was. But I wonder if you will keep on liking him when I tell you that he wanted to be known as the first of all the emperors, so he ordered that every book in the empire should be collected and burned. I have seen the village built today on the ‘Slope of the Burning Books’ where Emperor Chin made his enormous bonfire of all the old Confucian books. That was crime enough, but he had a deep pit dug in which nearly three hundred luckless scholars were buried alive up to their necks, after which heavy chariots were driven over their heads—and all because they would not give up their books. Are you still liking the old gentleman?”

Cynthia’s eyes were like saucers: “No! No! What a horrible person! I suppose there wasn’t a book left?”

“Not on paper. But the Chinese have prodigious memories. Each generation inherits the faculty of learning the classics poll-parrot fashion, so that after Chin died another emperor was able to find an old man, named Fu Sheng, who could repeat all the ‘Five Classics’ from memory. But he was over ninety years old and his hand far too unsteady to paint the characters. Even his voice was too husky and thick for any-

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body else to understand except his granddaughter, a little girl of thirteen. So it was her hand which wrote down every single one of those five books, which present-day Chinese scholars memorize."

"Hurrah for the thirteen-year-old lassie who got the better of a thirteen-year-old laddie! Although I suppose Emperor Chin was grown up by the time he burned the books. And now I'm going to admit frankly that the more I know of China the more I marvel how the first missionaries dared to go there! Indeed, I marvel how I dare go myself, stupid me! But of course it's safe nowadays, and so many Chinese want us and welcome us. But wasn't it quite different in the early days?"

"Quite different," came a chorus of voices, each quick to add an illustration:

"Take the case of Robert Morrison, for instance——"

"And Peter Parker with his lancet——"

"As for John Kenneth MacKenzie——"

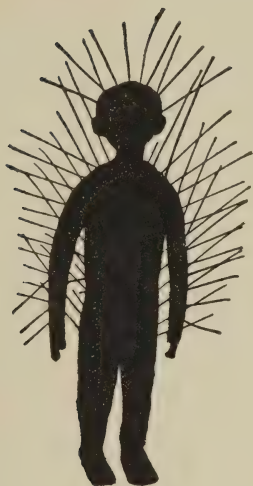
"Don't leave out James Gilmour, for he was a Robinson Crusoe if ever anybody was one!"

"Wait till you hear about Hudson Taylor
——"

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Cynthia opened her note-book once more: "Tell me!" she cried eagerly. "But do tell me one at a time—I've only two ears and one brain!"

The next few chapters are what they told her, one at a time.



No, this is not a porcupine! Nor a pin-cushion! It is the manikin which the quack doctors of China study when they want to locate the seven hundred places where it is supposedly safe to puncture a patient's body. You can model such a manikin from moulding clay, then stick it full of bristling needles to show what a painfully ignorant person any Dr. Pincushion must be.

It will be quite simple to cut out enough pill-bottles from white cardboard to distribute to each of your class (four can be cut out at one time). Color the corks brown and the cross red. On the remainder of the label let each person write the Bible verse which seems to him or her the most appropriate for a Christian doctor to quote to a poor Chinese patient.

UN-
DER-
STAND-
ING-
THE-
FUTURE:

"When one leaf moves all the branches shake."

"Past events are clear as a mirror; future events are as dark as lacquer."

"A doctor kills his patients but he suffers no penalty." (?)

IV

OPENING CHINA WITH A LANCET

You can lay a peck of Chinese trouble any day at Doctor Pincushion's door, for of all the quacks on earth he is the worst, yet for a thousand years at least he and his predecessors have been practising their peculiar brand of learning on the sick of China—Goose-feather Poultices? Tiger-hair Broth? Spider Soups?

“Oh well, these are only mild medicines,” boasts the modest Doctor Pincushion, importantly. “If you are *really* sick I can concoct still stronger pills from a combination of old rusty coffin-nails, bats' wings, dried scorpions, snake-skins, cockroaches, tigers' teeth, a sliver of your grandmother's finger-nail, and perhaps a little mud from the middle of your fireplace. Pretty strong! Strong enough to drive out twenty demon-dragons from your honorable insides.”

But just in case your demon-dragon does not “exit” even after such pills, then Doctor Pincushion knows the cure of cures. For in his home he keeps a little wooden model of a man

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bristling with several hundred little spikes—oh, a very pincushion of a fellow, he! And several hundred other spikeless spots freckle this curious manikin to show where needles can be poked in a human patient without killing him.

Solemnly Doctor Pincushion approaches *you*. Solemnly he sticks his long sharp needle into a corresponding spot upon your suffering body: “To let the pain demon escape,” he explains, pompously. And if your particular little demon does not rush out through the first hole, you will remember that there are several hundred other places where Doctor Pincushion can puncture you.

“No! No! No!” you scream in a panic. “This is ridiculous. This can never cure me.”

“Oh, very well,” says your ever-ready quack, and heats a coin red-hot, putting it where the pain is worst, for surely any such torture ought to frighten off the most bold of evil spirits. Perhaps you still feel that pain? He is not without other remedies. He solemnly advocates shaking, since in the process the little spiteful demon will surely be dislodged and seek a more steady resting-place.

Your fond relatives are nothing if not oblig-

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ing! They shake you and shake you and shake you, until you see stars, until the floor flies up to the ceiling, and the ceiling sails around like a cloud.

“ Oh, I want a *real* doctor ! ” you call, ungratefully overlooking the many ideas your resourceful quack has suggested.

“ But I’m all the doctor there is ! ” he assures you. And you have learned the dreadful fact that for hundreds and thousands of years China has known nothing better than this, that the Doctor Pincushions of other years have had only one manner of diagnosing disease: by the pulse. It is not necessary to see the patient—no; simply place your right hand on a book to steady it and let Doctor Pincushion press three fingers on the pulse in one wrist—how hard he thinks! For from this pulse he thinks he can learn the condition of your lungs and heart. Now please let him feel the other pulse, for then he can guess about your stomach and your liver. Pure guesswork, naturally, but Doctor Pincushion is so courteous, so willing to make another guess if the others were wrong.

“ Five tubes lead from the mouth to the stomach,” he informs you, “ soup must go down the

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soup-tube and rice go down the rice-tube. But if soup goes down the rice-tube, and rice goes down the soup-tube there will be trouble! Now perhaps that is what ails you today!"

Perhaps!

And this is all China had for so long. It is all that half of China has now. Except, of course, that there are charms written on special yellow charm-paper to be written out and pasted up around the sick-room or even on the patient's forehead. The ashes of such charms when burned ought to be a marvelous remedy. You have swallowed them many times when everything else failed.

But your greatest trouble comes if your eyes are dim or in pain, for then Doctor Pincushion has two cures: he tries putting ground glass in your eye. What? It hurts! Of course it hurts—perhaps he will puncture the eyeball with one of his needles to let in more light; after which you are blind indeed—stumbling by night, groping by day; praying to your Chinese gods to help you, laying rice upon their shrines, begging, pleading, hoping that some day—somewhere—somehow—you can be helped.

All this, and worse, Robert Morrison saw when

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he was so busy translating the Bible inside that quiet lonely room of his. He knew it had been going on for years and years; but would it go on for ages more?

Not if Dr. Peter Parker knew it! For exactly two months after Mr. Morrison's death this fine young American doctor landed in China; and would you believe it? before he left home people said it was a pity for a young man of such talents "to throw himself away on the heathen." But down in his heart he knew that to the great Lord Of All the yellow-skinned people were as dear as the white-skinned, and far more in need of a doctor.

And you, so blind and hopeless only a few paragraphs back in this story, what are you going to think of this newcomer? Will you go rushing for a prescription on the opening day? Oh, mercy no! You wag your head in terror and tell me the most outrageous stories: how this horrible white devil doctor from over the ocean makes his medicine from the eyes and hearts of kidnapped Chinese children! Everybody in Canton believes it. Also he grinds their baby bones to powder; he stews their limbs and corks them up in bottles.

It was no wonder, therefore, that on Doctor

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Parker's first day in his new hospital only one lone, lorn woman ventured in; I dare say her heart was beating like a trip-hammer as she wondered what stiff magic might hurt her any moment. But only three months later Doctor Parker was prescribing for a hundred or more patients each day—people from all classes: beggars in rags, stately officials, richly gowned ladies, *everybody* came! Some of the patients would come the night before in order to get first place in the line at the gateway, sleeping on their mats spread near the door. The Chinese never heard of such magic cures. No one seemed to be too sick for Doctor Parker!

Fascinating stories are told of his patients. One old gentleman of Canton who had not seen for years and years was so delighted when Doctor Parker restored his sight that he begged to have a Chinese artist paint the doctor's portrait in order that he might hang it up in his house and bow before it every morning!

Doctor Parker specialized in eye troubles, and one day his fame traveled two hundred miles from Canton to a little town where a certain young man was greatly worried about his old blind mother. He decided that a good son would

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certainly take his mother to this remarkable man! Well, wasn't he a good son? Therefore he must take her at once. He was much too poor to hire a sedan-chair and coolies to carry it, but he politely bundled the old lady on one side of his wheelbarrow, with bedding and rice-bags to balance on the other side; and away he started.

His neighbors were scandalized: "Go slowly! Go slowly!" they warned him. "You will send the poor old lady as a guest on high! Surely she will join her ancestors before you reach Canton."

"Rest your hearts!" he answered. "She will not die."

But he was not so certain as he sounded. He trundled the heavy wheelbarrow up-hill and down-hill; in each strange village the crowds in the street would question him curiously: "Where are you taking the ancient?"

"To a Christian's hospital in Canton to get new eyes."

"*Christians?* But those over-the-ocean men use magic! You will be bewitched! Dear, dear, what a crazy man you are!"

All along his route, day after day, that son saw nothing but wagging heads and sneering lips. Finally he reached Canton. The doctor ex-

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amined her eyes—yes! a delicate and serious operation might save her old eyes. He operated. For two wonderful months she lay in that hospital cot hearing every day the surprising story of Jesus Christ. She listened—she loved it—she believed. And in two months she could see! Surely you can picture their journey homeward. How at every stop in all those little villages people would swarm around that wheelbarrow, crying:

“Why, here you are! Here you are!”

“Here I am!” she chuckled. “Seeing! Rejoicing! And I have a new God—listen!” It took far longer to reach home than it had taken to go to Canton because the new Christians tarried everywhere along the way to tell their wonderful news of a Saviour. They opened their precious Bible. The son read aloud from it. The mother explained it. It makes us think how happy Robert Morrison would have felt to see his Bible being prized so dearly. That wheelbarrow left behind it, through two hundred miles of Chinese country, a new string of little towns interested in Christianity. Multiply the one wheelbarrow by countless other vehicles full of delighted patients, and you will understand why

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Peter Parker could say about himself a remark famous today all over the world:

"I have opened China at the point of a lancet!"

When Doctor Parker had his first furlough home in America he was invited to preach before Congress in Washington to an audience made up of senators and representatives. His sermon must have been quite different from any those men had ever heard before, for he told about his Canton hospital where 8,000 patients had been treated in five years; he told stories of those patients—how one old man who had had cataracts on his eyes for over forty years had a successful operation and said, stroking his long flowing beard, "I have lived till my beard has become long and hoary, but never before have I seen or heard of one who does such things as are done in this hospital!"

It was remarks like this which gave Doctor Parker such a perfect chance to explain about the Greatest Physician Of All who long years ago in Galilee had opened the eyes of the blind and preached the gospel to the poor, ever promising His followers, however, "*Greater works than these shall ye do because I go to My Father.*"



When a little circle of listeners has heard the story of Eleanor Chestnut, surely they will more easily remember that their hands count, too, if you distribute pencils and a number of paper hands, one to each person, so that on the palm may be written the verse given in the story, "Christ has no hands but our hands."

Draw an outline of your own left hand on a sheet of paper to get a pattern; then cut out at least ten thicknesses of paper at one time.

THIRTY PROVERBS:

"Better do a good deed near at home than go far away to burn incense."

"If you walk on snow you cannot hide your footprints."

"A wise man in a fool's service is a clear pearl thrown into lacquer."

V

HANDS ACROSS THE SEA

CYNTHIA says that when she first went to Sunday school, long years ago in the primary department, she remembers how she used to throw back her cunning golden head, and warble her very loveliest when the children sang "I Think When I Read that Sweet Story of Old." Her especially favorite verse began:

I wish that His hands had been placed on my head,
That His arms had been thrown around me,
And that I might have seen His kind look when He said:
"Let the little ones come unto Me."

She says that all her life she has wondered how it would be to feel those dear kind wonderful hands.

"And, do you know? on shipboard the missionaries told me stories which seemed to answer all my years of wondering. But the especial story was about Eleanor Chestnut. Somehow, when they told me of Robert Morrison and Peter Parker and Hudson Taylor I felt actually too lit-

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tle and unimportant for words. I went to my stateroom and cried. I said to the Plain Gray Lady: 'I couldn't possibly follow in their footsteps! I'm not nearly big enough or brave enough or wise enough or patient enough. Why, I'm not going to be any sort of good as a missionary! I decided too impulsively, I fear. For I see now that I'll get tired and discouraged and—and cross. You'll want to pack me straight home. I remember you told me that in the early days of Chinese Christianity somebody called it the *not-to-be-knocked-down-doctrine*. Well, I'm the kind that could easily be knocked down. I'm not a heroine. I'm just little Miss Cynthia Drummond.' But oh! if you could have heard my Plain Gray Lady talk, then you'd understand why I'm still on the job!"

For the Plain Gray Lady repeated softly: "Little Miss Cynthia Drummond: A China Shepherdess. But it sounds all right to me, my dear."

"*Sounds!* Yes, maybe! But can't you see I haven't a single shining talent? Imagine me living alone, like James Gilmour! Or fighting mobs, like Hudson Taylor! Or translating Bibles, like Robert Morrison! I'm the most

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ordinary girl—you have no idea how ordinary I am,” Cynthia said dismally.

“Really?” laughed the Plain Gray Lady. “That’s a very wholesome feeling, you know. Especially when you have a pair of hands.” She picked up Cynthia’s hands and looked at them intently. “Suppose I tell you a story about a pair of hands belonging to a girl who never had half your chances.”

And this is the story she told of Eleanor Chestnut: “Almost any American girl has had an easier life than she ever had, because her parents died when she was so little that she grew up poor and needing to work for all her tuition, clothes, and board through school and college, and later through medical college as well. Her best friend writes of those days, ‘Eleanor lived in an attic, cooked her own meals and nearly starved.’ But she had decided to train herself for medical missionary service, and in time she found herself in China, in charge of a hospital at Lien-chou. She was often lonely there, for much of the time there were no other missionaries. When the terrible Boxer crisis seemed to be passing her mission by, she wrote home to America, ‘I don’t think we are in danger, but even if we are we might as well

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die suddenly in God's work as by some long-drawn-out illness at home.' Which shows what stuff she was made of!

"After seven years she came home to America on furlough, speaking in many, many churches about China until she raised \$1,000 to build a chapel in Lien-chou. And you would have said that she ought to have a long life of usefulness ahead of her. Yet the very next year there was a curious misunderstanding about some religious festival in Lien-chou, and the Chinese in that town became a furious mob, seizing the mission, burning all the buildings, murdering all the missionaries, two of whom were a young married couple who had arrived only the day before.

"Can you picture that scene? Our little Dr. Eleanor Chestnut with all the ills of the town resting on her shoulders, with all the plans for the future forming in her head! But what does that mob care for plans? See, they are rushing her down to the temple steps at the foot of a very large tree. There she sits, waiting her turn to die, with ten thousand confused thoughts swinging through her mind. And then, out of the ten thousand confused thoughts, one thought—*a little boy!* A little boy in that seething mob! A

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little boy with an ugly gash in his head! And she alone in all that town knew how to heal him.

“Oh, not a moment to lose now! See, she calls him over, she tears off the hem of her dress, she cleans the wound as best she can, she binds it up with skilled, kind fingers, and none too soon, for see! the mob is striking her—they throw her into the river—she lies there as if asleep—but they stab her—and stab her. Yet Eleanor Chestnut is not dead to me, for in every touch I have ever put on the head of a Chinese boy I feel in my own clumsy fingers the sudden gentleness of Eleanor Chestnut’s touch on the head of that other boy. It has seemed to me that her sacrifice must not be in vain!

“Occasionally I tell my little blue-cotton pupils about her. They nod their Chinese heads so earnestly, their lovely Chinese eyes glow through their tears. ‘The hands of Eleanor Chestnut’ is a term we often use in dealing with our girls. For you know they, too, must often suffer persecution, especially when they speak at home about becoming Christians. Often whipped! Often starved! Often turned out-of-doors and disowned! So the story means something very real indeed to them. ‘The hands of Eleanor Chest-

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nut ' on the head of a little boy, a little boy in the mob when the mob was at its wildest. It seems to me that the Saviour Himself has written of her hands in His special book of remembrance."

Cynthia looked down at her own hands, skeptically; slim hands—young hands—untried hands. She slid them hastily between the hands of the Plain Gray Lady: "Won't you pray that my hands will be some good in China?"

" ' Establish Thou the work of our hands, O Lord, yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it, ' " was all the Plain Gray Lady said.

But that night, on deck, as Cynthia sat in a patch of silver moonlight, thinking, she suddenly realized with great surprise that there would be little boys and girls in China who would never feel the Saviour's hands placed on their heads unless they felt her hands; and she quoted:

Christ has no hands but our hands
To do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet
To lead men in His way;
He has no tongues but our tongues
To tell men how He died;
He has no help but our help
To bring them to His side.

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“ Oh, it seems to me that I really can't wait to get there and begin,” said Cynthia, looking out over the silver waves toward the place where China lay. And just then the ship's bell sounded several times, while a sailor's voice from somewhere high up called down:

“ All's well! ”



A Boat-With-An-Eye can be made from a piece of brown cardboard, a square brown box, and a small piece of tan matting or grass cloth. Draw a side view of the junk as shown here, with a high poop at the rear. From the cardboard cut the two sides of the boat; paste the square brown box between these two sides in the rear, for the poop; let the matting curve over the top. Sew the prows together firmly, but the keel very loosely so that the stitches hold the sides at least two inches apart along the bottom. Lay a piece of brown cardboard across these stitches. Paste an empty spool on this bottom, and in the spool insert a skewer for a mast. A piece of yellowish paper, curved and mock-fluted, may form the square sail. Blue crêpe-paper will make an ideal river, with twigs and pebbles for the banks.

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"When you travel by boat be prepared for a ducking."

"One foot cannot stand in two boats."

"When he cheats up to heaven in the price asked, you come down to earth in the price you offer."

VI

PIRATE PIE AND THE-BOAT-WITH- AN-EYE

THE Pacific Ocean does not last forever, of course; and there came a day of hustle and bustle on deck when everybody rushed to the railing and, pointing rudely with forefingers, made what is called in grammar a simple declarative sentence: "*I see land!*" You would have supposed that they had made it, or at least discovered it quite by themselves, à la Mr. Marco Polo; instead of which the captain knew it by heart and had known it for years and years—knew the way the yellow-brown water of the Yangtze came into the blue ocean, knew the picturesque old junks with square brown sails patched in many colors, knew the quaint sampans full of yellow-faced families who thought it worth their while to play tag beside the monster boat hoping some one on the deck would throw down pennies. For some one always did! How could you resist that toothless old creature who held up her pole with a net on the end as she croaked in a perpetual torrent:

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“ Hello, money! Hello, money! Hello, money! Hello, money! ”

“ Like a coffee-mill! ” sighed Cynthia.

“ Or a cracked Victrola record which some one forgets to shut off! ” the Plain Gray Lady said sadly, for the old woman was much too old to be out in a leaky boat all day long.

Cynthia had never felt so thrilled. It is true that she had known from the beginning about coming to China; but there is land that you come to—and leave; and land that you come to—and keep. And of course it made all the difference in the world!

Later on, when she stood on dry land, she felt less as if she owned China like a possession in her coat-pocket. “ I’m beginning to feel insignificant all over again. For this is a real city, and a real hotel, and a real trolley-car, and a real telegraph office across the street. This isn’t a heathen country! ”

“ Isn’t it? ” smiled the Plain Gray Lady. “ And yet I remember hearing of a dying man who fell down on the street from sheer weakness one day while a voice yelled from a window above him: ‘ Get up! You are not allowed to die opposite the Telegraph Office, as it is a government

building!’ That’s because the person on whose doorstep a man dies is obliged to buy the coffin!”

“Dear me!” Cynthia exclaimed. “Perhaps it is a heathen country after all.”

“Especially heathen out where I live,” boasted the little missionary in mock pride. “We’re too awful out there! The only autos are men’s backs and arms, the only lights are kerosene-lamps, and as for telegrams——”

Cynthia squared her shoulders: “You can’t scare me, I shall love it. All my life I’ve wanted to be a pioneer-grandmother sort of person, like my own ancestors who went West in prairie schooners and grappled with poverty and Injuns and forest wildernesses. I know I look frivolous, but I’ve worked up a lovely state of adventure-someness down under my goldy hair and my pinky cheeks.”

“You’ll do!” smiled the older lady contentedly; and they set out to buy matches and canned goods and all the myriad things which would be needed through the year. Cynthia was fascinated by the shops, but shocked at the way her Plain Gray Saint bargained with the polite merchants who lauded their “very-much handsome pots and pans”; “Lady, I give you it—at a

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cheapness! One dollar! Take it home! It is yours!" only to have this little customer sniff disdainfully:

"One dollar? Not worth it. Twenty cents, perhaps."

"Alas, what pain to hear such sums, Excellency. Sixty cents, then. Sixty cents."

"No," said the little saint firmly, "twenty-five cents."

"Cannot do!" wailed the merchant. "Too much empty stomachs under the rooftree. Must fill with rice. Twenty-five cents, cannot do. Forty, maybe?"

"No," said the lady, and walked out of the shop with Cynthia trailing miserably behind, worrying about those little empty stomachs. Presently there was the clatter-patter of straw sandals; the merchant had arrived, the pot held out in his hands like a gift: "Thirty cents?" he smiled anxiously.

"Thirty cents," agreed the lady, tucking it under her arm.

Cynthia was amazed. "Were you both crazy?"

"No, one of us was Chinese. They always haggle over the price. It is quite the thing to do.

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No one ever pays the first price asked. I knew all along that I would get it for thirty cents, for that's the proper price, but I had to start lower so that as he came down from a dollar I could mount up to thirty cents. Otherwise he might 'lose face.' And nothing is more unthinkable than that. It means lose your dignity, really. Of course I usually talk Chinese and can get better bargains than when I speak English for the benefit of a little green China Shepherdess."

"Don't mind me!" Cynthia begged, and counted the days until they started off in the boat which was to take them along their special river. Many times Cynthia longed for extra eyes to see the curious sights along the shore, and life grew even more exciting when the day came to change into a little house-boat with its raised afterdeck and its bright blue eye painted on the bow.

"Why the eye?" asked Cynthia.

"To see with, of course!" the Plain Gray Lady explained. "You see, there's a goddess of sailors called Ma-Cu. With her two faithful attendants, 'Thousand-Mile Eye' and 'Favoring-Wind Ear,' she's supposed to be ready for any emergency, but it's necessary for Thousand-Mile Eye to see, so every devout sailor protects his

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boat with an eye on the bow. And almost any day you can hear Favoring-Wind Ear appealed to by encouraging little whistles if the sailors need a breeze. Listen this very minute, my dear!"

Cynthia listened to the sailors whistling for the wind. "I'm in China!" she whispered to herself. "And it's a very heathen place, but oh! so beautiful! Look at those banks—like giant patchwork quilts made up of little farms: there a brown field, there a green, here a yellow field, and there more greens."

Inside the Boat With The Bright Blue Eye was a most amusing little affair, as Cynthia wrote home:

"BEST FAMILY ON EARTH:

"It's a nice little boat, even if it has got a black and blue eye. It's also got the funniest insides, all divided up into things that look like comical coal-bins; life on board is one continual obstacle race, for we are forced to climb over the partitions from bin to bin to reach our own pigeon-holes. I think hard before I leave my small corner, to be sure that I have everything I can possibly need for hours to come. Even then I

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often remember cherished possessions left too far behind me. But this especially when pirates come on board.

“It was a great mistake about the pirates. Missionaries don’t generally have them. The Plain Gray Lady insists that she has gone up and down this river for twenty years and never once been pirated. Never once! Bandits on land? Oh, yes! Robbers in the front door? Yes, sometimes! Thieves in the back door? Mercy, yes! But not a single pirate. I do bring out the best in folks somehow; even pirates are less bashful. You will want to hear details.

“Well, it was sunset-time and I was quoting silent poetry to myself on deck. I never saw a sun so pink or a sky so peacocky with gorgeous blues and golds and greens and oranges. Moreover the whole river was a broad band of gold-and-scarlet ribbon, with the hilltops purple. So many colors at once made it seem as if I had fallen into an artists’ palette by mistake. Or should I say like falling into a pirate, by mistake? For all of a sudden there he was. And there I was.

“Now the only Chinese I know so far is chop-chop. It means ‘quickly’ and I learned it on the

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ocean from a missionary. Since it was the *only* word I knew, I called it very clear and loud to the peacocky sunset. One little fat pink cloud split in half with amusement. I began to wonder if *chop-chop* was another dialect from my new one (which I haven't learned yet). But nevertheless I repeated it much louder than before, *chop-chop!*

"Then came that blessed American voice from an inside bin calling: 'Is it some joke, dearest?'

"'No, I think it's a pirate! *Chop-chop!*' I shouted at the top of my lungs, wondering where in the world all the stupid sailors could be. And then, plump! down came a thud over my entire face as the pirate laid his big flat palm from forehead to chin. I thought that he had certainly ruined my dear little nose forever, but I did not worry about such trifles for the pirate was tying my hands behind me and laying me out flat on the deck looking up at a little startled new moon.

"There wasn't a sound from anybody for a thousand years. Not a sailor whispered to Miss Favoring-Wind Ear. Not a Plain Gray Lady called from her bin. Just the Pirate and I, and the moon, and the peacocky sky were left in the world. I was very unhappy. So was the darling

new moon. He pulled a cloud over his face in order not to feel so sorry for any little shepherdess who had to stop before she had even begun.

“Presently the Pirate rolled me over with his foot and tried to get my wrist-watch off. The ribbon fits very snugly, as you know, and he could not work it down over my wrist. Neither did he understand how to unclasp it; and I being so reclined, was not inclined to help him. I felt so flat! My hands were so backward! I know now what the Chinese mean by ‘losing face.’

“Well, a thousand more years passed by. The pirate rolled me over again, and I was sorry to see the peacock sky turning blue on top, and darker. I began to feel a bit chilly. Little stars came out and winked at me as if it were a huge joke. I began thinking how thrilling it would all be in the movies. I began wishing somebody could see me—somebody with a lasso: William S. Hart or Tom Mix or ‘Doug.’ Then I began wishing for you; you would have been so startled and frightened to see me, dear family! I think it was about this time that I cried a little and thought of Hudson Taylor. What would he have done? Pray, of course. So I prayed, too. But I

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wondered how I could possibly be saved on that lonely river——

“Just then Pirate Number Two loomed on the scene. He had a disk in his hand. He was smacking his lips in the most cat-that-swallowed-the-canary-fashion. His lips were simply dripping; the way he licked them was awful.

“My own Pirate leaned over and snapped off part of the disk greedily. He smacked his lips noisily, also, and something juicy red ran down his chin, falling *plop!* on my cheek.

“‘Look out there! You’ll spot my dress!’ I warned him. And then the dreadful absurdity of it struck me: this was no picnic supper, these were pirates. This wasn’t play-acting, this was a desperate occasion. Maybe I wouldn’t be needing any dress tomorrow—oh, what an end to a new China Shepherdess! And then of course I started to cry; but would you believe it, dear family, I immediately started to laugh.

“For imagine it, I had been bossing pirates! I! All to save my third-best jersey dress—I laughed and laughed and laughed. Although down underneath the dress I wasn’t at all amused over it.

“But the Pirates were. They stopped eating

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Pirate Pie and looked down at me suspiciously and then approvingly. They said something exceedingly Chinese to each other. They gave a slow smile. Then my special Pirate stooped over and stuffed a chunk of Pirate Pie between my lips. I almost choked on it until I found that it was—yes, actually, it was one of the pies the Presbyterian missionary had given us on the little river steamer. She had been making a half-day's trip up-river to see her married daughter, and she had said a pie might add a little tang to our monotonous river diet! It certainly had! I chewed it as best I could, and the Pirates seemed amused to see the juiciness roll down my chin.

“And then, just as the moon and the stars were beginning to be all the light there was, a strange thing happened. Music! The Pirates jumped at least a foot high: ‘What dreadful magic is this?’ they seemed to be asking. You never heard music so very saucy and carefree:

Yes, we have no bananas,
We have no bananas today.

You know the way it sounds at home in America? Well, all I've got to say is that it sounds even more so in China. On a river! At night!

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“The Pirates were evidently frightened stiff. When they finally dared to move they put their heads together and whispered frantically. Then I had an inspiration: ‘*Chop-chop!*’ I yelled.

“They took the hint! They took it by diving over the side of this haunted boat so very *chop-chop* that the whole ark almost tipped over. I could hear them splashing as they swam away. I wanted to cry with relief, but how could I when that silliest song ever invented was still bawling about bananas—bananas—bananas.

“I tried very hard to squirm out of my bandages, I rolled east and west in order to loosen them, and suddenly I seemed to roll right on top of a voice at my very ear whispering, ‘Where are they?’

“My blood ran cold once more, for it was such a ghostly little disembodied affair, coming from nobody in particular. But then of course I realized that it was somebody very particular. ‘Is it you, little Plain Gray Lady?’ I whispered back.

“‘Who else in the crew speaks English?’ she said. ‘Where are those men?’

“‘I think they’re gone elsewhere to shop for bananas. Could you please untie my hands for me? Or else help me to get up on my feet. And

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what happened to you? And where in the world are the crew?’

“Ah, yes, the crew! You never in your life saw men tied round and round with so many ropes. The most whistling of all our sailors had a broken ankle from the rough treatment. I wish you could have seen my Plain Gray Wonder set it.

“‘Are you a doctor?’ I asked, as she seemed to click a bone into place and bind her splints (two wooden ladles!) like a veteran.

“‘Mercy no!’ she cried. ‘But of course in twenty years in a walled town without a doctor I’ve had to pick up a lot of practical first aid.’

“‘Such as starting up a Victrola to be “rough on pirates” so that they will die outdoors. It was too delicious! How did you happen to think of it?’

“‘Well, I prayed. At first it seemed all I could do, I was so tightly tied. Then I managed to use my hands, fortunately they were tied in front of me which was a great help, but my ankles were lashed together so that I could not possibly climb a partition to reach you. I never was so anxious. And then the thought of music came like an inspiration. Sunset-time is a superstitious moment to most of these ignorant Chinese, and my little Victrola’s tone of voice is like nothing

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human, since its drenching the other day. I imagine the poor men thought they had fallen into a nest of evil spirits. You will notice that they left all their bundles of booty behind them. God has been very good to us, my dear.'

"I took her in my arms. My own little Plain Gray Heroine! 'Tell me the verse you like best?' I asked.

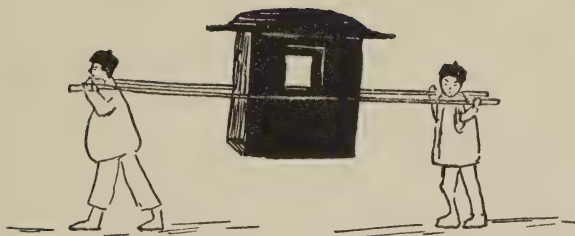
"'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world,' she quoted quietly. 'You know, Cynthia, it's written specially for persons like ourselves, because it's the latter half of a grand sentence. The first half tells us to go into all the world, so if I keep my half of it the Saviour keeps his half; and I'm really the safest woman in China!'

"So now you know, belovedests, that I'm living with A Friend of God; an Unafraid Mortal. I wouldn't have missed the Pirates for anything, although I am glad that we leave the blue-eyed boat tomorrow for a short overland trip in sedan-chairs.

"Aren't I a thrilling sister, Bobbie? And you dear little sisters?

"Your own devoted

"CYN."



You will see how easily a sedan-chair can be made from a square box with two windows cut in each side and an entrance opening in front, meat skewers or knitting-needles or twigs for the handles. The bearers may be duplicates of the pedler drawn in Chapter XVIII.

A novel string of firecrackers can be made with little squares of bright red paper. Write on each something about the Chinese language—e. g. what a roof with a pig under it represents; or, a woman under a broom; or, that *ma* means cat; *ma* means grandmother, etc; or, that to learn Chinese takes lungs of steel, patience of Job, etc. Thread a needle with heavy white thread; roll each red paper into a scroll, firecracker size, and sew the raw edge of the paper to the scroll with one big invisible stitch, the knot showing at one end of the firecracker and the loose end of the thread forming the fuse at the other end. “Explode” these by pulling them open and reading aloud how poor Cynthia poll-parroted Chinese.

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"A gem is not polished without rubbing nor a man perfected without trials."

"To see it once is better than to read about it a thousand times."

"When heaven rears a man he grows very fat; when men rear one he is but skin and bones."

VII

POLLY WANT A CRACKER?

No, Polly decidedly did *not* want a cracker! She clapped her hands over her dear little pink ears, shut her violet-gray eyes, and screwed up her forehead into a regular bow-knot of terror; all of which shows you what a very green Polly she was. For of course nothing is so polite in China as to "say it with firecrackers," and it was the most natural thing in the world on the day when the Plain Gray Lady came back to town for many of the population to turn out to meet her sedan-chair and make a glorious racket. For this, that was lost, was found! This, that had gone over the ocean, had come back again! There were no firecrackers too big or too noisy to say "Welcome to our city."

"This must be the Fourth of July!" thought the poor unimportant Polly as her sedan-chair followed second in the procession. But of course she remembered at once that not only was the date not July, but also there was no especial reason why the Chinese should celebrate American

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Independence Day. Therefore this must be in honor of the little lady in the front chair, for the farther the procession traveled the noisier the people, until finally as the chair-bearers set down their burdens before a certain gateway the racket became truly terrific.

The Plain Gray Lady stepped out of her chair. More firecrackers! Polly stepped out of her chair! Other firecrackers! Her hands flew up to cover her ears.

"You went away one, and you come back two," some one called to the Plain Gray Lady pointing to Polly. "Is this outside-country person going to stay?"

"Yes, she will stay," smiled the little lady, contentedly hooking her arm through Cynthia's—for I think you have probably guessed who "Polly" was. Although you can hardly know why she earned her fourth nickname; but Polly knew only too well. As she wrote to her family:

"MY OWN HOME-SWEET-HOME FOLKS:

"I am nothing these days but the greenest of green poll-parrots. Somebody says a word to me, and I say it back at them. Over and over and over until I'm dizzy with the sound! And it

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matters how I say it. It matters awfully! If I say *Moung* with an upward inflection it means the verb 'to ask,' if I say *Moung* emphatically, it means 'door.' And would you believe it? but a man on the steamer told me that the little two-letter *Ma* has exactly seven meanings according to the way you intone it. Seven, just fancy! It can mean 'cat,' 'horse,' 'goat,' 'grandmother,' 'cannot,' 'scold,' or 'oatmeal.' It just depends how you say it! But isn't it simply horrible to feel that at any moment I might forget and call a grandmother a goat, or, at best, a cat, unless I can bear in mind that granny must have a low tone while pussy needs a high one as if I were about to pick a quarrel.

"My beloved Plain Gray Lady has gotten me a suitable teacher, the gentlest, meekest man in China I am sure; he shakes his own hands when he comes into the room and bows so politely at every remark he makes that we both resemble rocking-horses. He thanks me when I do well and begs my pardon when I make a mistake. Needless to say he is always asking it!

"The spoken language, you far-away dears, is one thing, a mountain of a task; but the written language, alas! is a whole mountain range; for

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it has no regular alphabet but is made up of picture symbols called 'characters' which represent words. For instance, *peace* has the compound character of woman and roof: the woman under a roof. My Plain Gray Darling tells me with twinkles in her anything-but-plain-gray eyes that the Chinese think there is no peace if the lady isn't kept indoors!

"*Good* is represented by the character of a woman and son, since the gods bless every good Chinese mother with a boy.

"*Quarrel*, alas! alas! is represented by the character for two women, undoubtedly because—like those in the U. S. A.—their tongues are prone to pick one!

"*Home* is represented by a pig under a roof, because a pig is a valuable critter with right of way.

"*Wife* is represented by the character for 'woman' standing under 'broom.' My Plain Gray Lady tells me sadly that not only must the Chinese daughter-in-law sweep clean and sweep often, but if she does her duty badly the broom comes down *bang!* on her poor little back.

"Says my teacher to me: 'When you have *heart* to the left and *blood* to the right, the char-

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acter means *to pity*; but when you have *heart* on one side and *star* on the other it means to *wake up*. When there is *hand* on one side and *foot* on the other, it means to *take hold*. When *water* is on one side and *stand up* is on the other, the character means *to cry*. When *grass* is on top and *name* is down below, it means *tea*. Have you honorably got it?’

“Multiply all this picture language by five thousand and all the spoken language by another five thousand (for that is the very fewest one can live on!) and you will understand why Mr. Milne said to Robert Morrison: ‘To learn Chinese is a work for men with bodies of brass, lungs of steel, heads of oak, and eyes of eagles, hearts of apostles, memories of angels, the patience of Job, and the years of Methusaleh.’

“Knowing your Cynthia as you do, the question is, Do I qualify? I’m wondering seriously! In any case I’m nothing but a green poll-parrot all day long, imitating my meek little teacher. I eat, poll-parrot, and go to bed. I even poll-parrot abominably in my sleep. Then I get up, eat, poll-parrot, and tumble wearily into bed again. I feel paralyzed sometimes to think of the conversational breaks I may make all my life, just as regu-

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lar poll-parrots often do when they squawk 'Thief!' at the preacher and 'Kiss me, darling!' to the plumber.

"I haven't told you a thing about the Plain Gray Lady's house. I shall never forget my first impression of it as arm-in-arm she led me into it with firecrackers to right of us, firecrackers to left of us volleying and thundering. 'Nobly we walked and well' right through a front door like anybody's front door, into a hall like anybody's hall, into a small plain parlor like anybody's parlor. It was just every-day America planted right here in the heart of China. But my little Plain Gray Lady is by no means one of the anybodies or the everybodies! She's Somebody! Lovelier and sweeter and frailer and gray-eyed-er than I had supposed.

"She's made this place too dear. Flowers? Oh, my! Everywhere. If she sticks an umbrella in the ground it roots, grows up, and blooms. Think of me, my own self—the most parasol of mortals outwardly, yet she's planted me already, and every day I keep pulling myself up to see how I'm taking root. My very first day she said to me: 'Now while your teacher is an excellent man, he is not a Christian. Don't forget for a moment

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that while you are imitating his Chinese it will be a remarkable chance for him to begin imitating your Christianity.'

"It has given me my one bright spot in language work, I assure you. And one day when I said I feared I would not be much use when school opens she said in her calm little fashion: 'I thought maybe you could sit in your room, dearest, just at certain hours. It could be a prayer-room where the girls could come if they wanted to. For they do come! I've always had my room a place like that where I sat calmly at certain times each day, but of course I have had to steal those hours from other duties. It will be the greatest blessing to have you take this over! A little Christian weather-breeder, dear, a Christian atmosphere-maker.'

"Did you ever know such a refreshing creature? She seems to wash the face of every morning for me, so that I start afresh.

"'Oh dear!' I wail, like Mr. Shakespeare's funny little schoolboy who crept like a snail unwillingly to school, 'now I've got to go and poll-parrot all morning.'

"'What of it?' she cries. 'Think how soon you'll be skylarking all over town.'

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“Yesterday we went to see an old lady living in a mud-puddle. The puddle was a mistake! For there had been heavy rains, and the river had come indoors from one side while the brook had come in from another, and the very heavens had come in through the leaky roof. The old lady was very grumbly and mumbly and helpless. She scolded everybody in sight. She scolded me, and I think she even scolded my little Plain Gray Lady. It certainly *sounded* like scolding. But my Plain Gray One beamed on her, and lo! the warmth of that smile began drying up the puddles. Really!

“For quite energetically she moved the old lady’s chair out of the puddles, she showed Mrs. Lazy Daughter-in-law how to dig a clever ditch so that the puddles could be persuaded to run outdoors in channels. After a half-hour of irrigation enterprises life seemed more bearable for the old lady, whereupon presents from America were presented to the entire family. You should have seen their faces as they untied the strings and held up—well, what were the things anyhow? It was plain to be seen that nobody knew. They giggled a little, like children on Christmas morning when the suspense is thickest.

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“Then the Plain Gray Lady demonstrated what handkerchiefs are for. The whole family took to nosewiping. One small boy had such a little button of a nose that I feared it would be wiped entirely away. But it emerged very, very pink and shining, his little slant eyes actually crossing as he tried in vain to see the pink button—before and after. The most flattering remarks were delivered to the donor by all parties concerned. Bowing in a polite row they begged us to ‘Go slowly! Go slowly!’ when we took our departure.

“‘And now I shan’t mind going there quite so much,’ said my Plain Gray Saint, cheerfully. ‘You see, it’s far pleasanter when people have handkerchiefs. But that family has been much too poor for such extravagances. They have had too much trouble in their house lately to think of indulging themselves.’

“‘House?’ I asked. ‘That isn’t a house, that’s a shanty! Think of the mud—think of those pecking chickens—those yapping dogs—no windows, just leaks in the roof. Why do they plant their house right where the brook and the river meet, anyhow?’

“‘*Feng Shui*,’ she answered.

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“ ‘ I haven’t poll-parroted those words into my memory yet, darling lady, have I? ’

“ ‘ Probably not! The combination means “wind-water,” or really the Science of Luck. It’s such a delicate science that China is full of special luck doctors to tell you on what day Feng Shui will give you good fortune in marrying, in buying, in selling, in having a funeral. Everybody has his or her special Feng Shui, so that it would be a cruel neighbor who would move a pebble from the front yard or break a twig on the property—Feng Shui might be disturbed! And sometimes a neighbor’s chimney spoils the luck of the family next door. The family we just visited used to live next door to my school. But the Christian singing spoiled their luck. We had really terrible arguments over it. They pasted charm-papers all around their premises. They put a little tin policeman on their roof to shoot the evil spirits, but I was too much for them. They had to leave! And Feng Shui has treated them no better in their new home than before. That’s what the old lady was scolding me about—that little boy’s father and mother both died while I was away last year; she says the spirits of the new location are against the whole family.

“Look at these mud-puddles, for instance?” she said.’

“I said for the hundredth time, ‘This is China!’ adding, ‘Is there a reason why all the roofs tip up at the corners?’

“‘There is! For the lower air is full of evil spirits. These spirits are stupid little things, they can only travel in straight lines—that’s the reason for our crooked streets and crooked lanes. It’s also the reason why no two doors in a Chinese house are ever opposite each other, for woe betide the person passing between if an evil spirit was en route from door to door! He would be instantly sick, or instantly have bad luck in business. So there’s a special devil screen before each heathen front door in town. And a fascinating curved roof is really a spiritual shoot-the-chute, for if an evil spirit comes dashing down to enter the courtyard, zip! he strikes that up-turned cornice and is bounced off into the upper air.’

“You safe American youngsters, isn’t this a shame? A perfect shame? I remembered how that our Handkerchief Family had pieces of paper pasted on the outside of their chimney; were they charms, too? I asked.

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“ ‘Yes; little sign-posts, as it were, warning the evil spirits away. Indoors they had the character for tiger painted on the chimney, for the mere mention of tigers gives demons a panic.’

“ By this time we had come to the little hill just outside the gates and were looking down on the roofs of the walled city—tiled in blue-gray, blue-green, or red, or thatched, each with the inevitable slant upward.

“ ‘And only one story high, you notice,’ the Plain Gray Lady explained, ‘for it is only Christianity which adds a second story to a man’s house. I think that’s true all over the world. And it’s only Christianity that gives you and me the choice of being old maids, my dear! Such a creature is unheard of in heathen communities. And wide streets are another Christian boon. Look how near together the roofs of those houses are!’

“ ‘Some day,’ I laughed, ‘I think that I will try walking all over town on the rooftops!’

“ ‘Please don’t, Poll-Parrot!’ groaned my older missionary. ‘Let me warn you that you are enough of an astonishment now. Didn’t you notice this afternoon how some of the children scampered away as we came nearer? That’s

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partly your hair but mostly the smelling-salt demons corked in that bottle of yours.'

"I flourished said bottle regretfully: 'If I could only leave my nose at home! But I find the open sewers of your city very deadly, madam, not to mention little piles of garbage standing here and there. As for your million flies, I feel as if I were playing our old party game of Buzz. Mercy on us, just look at those cats in the tree!'

"My dears, they were the deadest of dead pussies, tied up there with a piece of yellow charm-paper to ward off the cat demons! So now you know why I keep saying to myself a dozen times a day, 'I am in China!' Perhaps you are beginning to understand why I must learn Chinese *chop-chop*, for our school opens in a few months, and I want to be

"Your loving

"CHINESE CHATTER-BOX."



For the family of Amazing Grace you will need three or four of the Chinese women and as many Chinese men, also plenty of children in smaller sizes made from the patterns given in Chapters IX and X. Stand all these dolls in a brave row facing a Boxer captain, one of the men dolls with a yellow girdle and yellow turban. (Yellow being the Manchu and also the Buddhist color, was adopted as the Boxer sign of leadership.) A chalk cross is drawn on the floor, but one by one, beginning with grandfather and ending with the baby, the members of the family refuse to trample on the cross and are stabbed by the Boxer's sword.

Each doll should be cut from two thicknesses of colored cardboard; blue, purple, green, etc. Paste together the two heads and shoulders nearly to the waist, then spread the feet apart so that the figure may stand alone. Be sure to cut the soles of the feet flat, as indicated, otherwise the dolls cannot stand steadily. It is lots of fun to experiment with the face—four dashes, a dot, and an o will make eyes, nose, and mouth. Just practise in your spare moments. These are the dolls to use for other stories, too—when you want a Granny, or a mother, or a Deacon Ding.

THE
PROVERBS;

"If a man at home receives no visitors, when abroad he will have no host."

"Let every one sweep away the snow from his own door and not meddle with the hoar frost on his neighbor's tiles."

"Marble is not less hard or less cold for being polished."

VIII

THE BEST SELLER IN A CELLAR

“TODAY,” said the China Shepherdess, “I’d like to see the thrillingest, thankfulest place in town. You’ve shown me all the heathen spots, so could I please have a thriller? Of course I don’t want to get into actual danger, or get tangled up in the red tape of international diplomacy——”

“Exactly!” the Plain Gray Lady said soberly. “I think I will prescribe Amazing Grace. She’s in the next room.”

Cynthia tiptoed to the door and took a good look. “What a quaint little blue-cotton person! I feel better already. But can she speak English?”

Amazing Grace simply beamed and beamed. “English are such a one un-easy talk to speak!” she answered. “Cannot do! But I do make a thank for you being in our school!” She bowed politely.

The Plain Gray Lady stated Cynthia’s burning desire for a thrill—for something unusual.

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“She make a urge for seeing the what-nobody-else-sees? Well now, should it be somethings for the honorably self to buy, or just somethings to making the eyes fluttering, or perhaps somethings to make merry the worshipful heart?” Amazing Grace knew human nature.

Cynthia wanted to hug the little guide. “All three, please! Couldn’t my eyes flutter while my heart makes merry?”

“Can do!” beamed Amazing Grace. “It are just come into my head. Make a steppings after me, so you pleases.”

They began a zigzag walk down crooked streets and narrow lanes; long gaudy shop signs flapped overhead, and wheelbarrows, sedan-chairs, and all sorts of pedlers jostled them at every step. Barbers were cutting their customers’ hair right out in the street, bakers were baking little cakes in portable ovens while you waited. Cynthia had a dozen curious sights to see, when suddenly Amazing Grace turned off into a gloomy muddy lane and entered a dark shadowy doorway. If Cynthia felt afraid to follow she did not care to show it, for Amazing Grace was dusting off a chair in the most matter-of-fact way and begging her to “honorably sit.”

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For a dramatic moment she stared at her guest; then she began: "You do please got to listen a story," she begged, "a story of the family who are once lived in this here house. So big a family as you could not count on my two hands, with grandfather and uncles and childrens, nice little laughing childrens what are full of happy all days. You could to see them in this room as the honorably old man are prop his big horn glasses on his honorably nose and are make readings from the Christian Book of God. That was why they are got full of happy—see?"

Cynthia nodded.

"Well, came a day. Celestial sun shining over the roof; grandmother sitting by the fireplace full of peace; mother cooking rice in the pot; little children full of happy; Da Ngen sweeping floor in the Christian's way. Then *tramp! tramp! tramp!* came marchings in the street. 'Ah me!' sighed that mother, and are calling the childrens into her arms in fear. She are know what is. Then bang! bang came knockings on the door. 'Let us in!' sounded yells without."

Amazing Grace moved to the door, swung it open dramatically and said: "Honorably step!" Cynthia had the uncanny feeling that shadowy

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people were really stepping inside—people with an evil purpose. Then shutting the door, Amazing Grace continued:

“Five mens are step inside. Mens by the name of Boxers, and they are scowl with great fierceness all times. Then the captain are draw his sharp sword from the belt around him and are shout loud: ‘Speak up—are anybody in this house Christians?’ Well, the honorably grandmother stand up to bow and say with proudness, ‘We are all that.’ Then quicker than flashes the Boxer captain are wave his big sword: ‘Stand in a row!’ he are shouting. So the family are stand in a row—honorably grandfather at one end, plump baby to the other end.”

Amazing Grace showed the very spots where they had stood until Cynthia seemed to see every one of them: the dear old grandfather peering through the horn glasses propped on his nose, the trembling grandmother wondering what was the matter, the frightened uncles and aunts summoned from other rooms, the astonished children, the unconcerned baby, plump as a pin-cushion, in his padded jackets. Then with another dramatic swerve Amazing Grace pretended to be the Boxer captain. Leaning over,

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she drew the sign of the cross on the earthen floor with her finger.

“He are draw the cross this way with his glittering sword, and on it he are put the dear, dear Bible. Then he sneer: ‘Step on it, you Christians, and I are saving your lives for you. Come on, stamp on it good and heavy, one by one!’ But no, the honorably grandfather, he are not make that steppings. As for the feeble grandmother, no, no, not to save her poor white hairs would she put stampings on the dear Saviour’s Bible. And the uncles all shook their heads, no; also the aunts—no, no! Not on that honorably sign of the cross nor on that so precious Book. Then it are the turn of the little bits of children, so full of happy ten minutes ago, so full of scare now because of glittering swords. But no, they are not make any stampings on their onliest story-book; not the boys; not the girls. And not that littlest bit of plump baby either—he wobble his surprised little head. ‘No, no!’ he babble, just like every one else, although he are got no idea what it are all about.”

Cynthia held her breath, and her heart beat painfully fast. “Oh!” she cried brokenly, “surely—surely that dreadful Boxer didn’t dare

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to *kill* them? Oh, Amazing Grace, not all of them?"

Amazing Grace nodded silently. "Mostly all," she said in a smothered voice, "but there are great confusion arose. So many in the family, and only five Boxers, so Da Ngen are by the door and are slip through, snatching three of the little bits of childrens with her. Which are the way she did not see the awfulness, for there are queer cellar under this house, where grandfather merchant used for to hide his mostly precious merchandise. Only a big hole in the earth, but there Da Ngen hide with the poor childrens. How shall I told it? How her heart was sore with heavy inside her; how all day she are crouch with the childrens inside her arm. Then when night came she are creep out to get foods—ah! I cannot speak what she saw."

Cynthia began crying as if her heart would break. "Right in this very room?" she sobbed.

"Yes," answered Amazing Grace softly. "But you are not rightly to cry, Miss Honorably Stranger, this are to put a thankful in your heart to know how the Lord God are got Chinese who love him so hard they are willingly to die with pains. There is only proudness for that family,

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when I tell you the beautiful endings. For Da Ngen are found the Bible in the ashes of the fire-place, so she are taking it down into the cellar and are hidden it safe. Boxers come snooping, but are got no sight of nobodies. One, two, three days pass, then Da Ngen venture out to get foods for empty stomachs; four, five, six more days, out again for more foods. And so on, weeks on end. Then danger are over, and neighbors are make discover of starving childrens. Surprises are no word for them. My! My!”

Cynthia broke in impatiently, “Then what happened?”

Amazing Grace said beseechingly: “I like you should understand properly how Da Ngen are earn money for feedings those childrens. This way: those heathen neighbors are full of curious. They wags their polite heads but cannot understood how Christians will die instead of stampings on Bible. So they do got desires for touching that Book with their curious hands and for reading it with curious eyes. Well, Da Ngen she do charge so many bits of cash for climbing down in cellar to reading her Bible saved from ashes. Are it give you a painfully shock?”

“No, no!” cried Cynthia, her eyes shining, “I

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think she was the pluckiest girl I ever heard of to manage to save those children and feed them. Where is she now, bless her heart? ”

Amazing Grace squinted shyly at Cynthia. “ Why, she are *me!* ” she said bashfully, “ Da Ngen are my Christian name, which means Big Grace, or Amazing Grace, as the Miss Heavenly Teacher call me, when it are done over into American talk. As for the childrens, the brother are being minister in town, the sister married, while the little bit baby are all growed up into nice school-teacher. For those Boxers did come many year ago, what you call 1900, yes? ”

Cynthia looked in astonishment at Amazing Grace. “ You’re too little and frail and young to have lived through such terrors, my dear. What do you do now? ”

“ There aren’t nothings to tell, I are just the same me. I help at the school. But I do got fine husband, who are selling Bibles every day. For ever since those Boxers, the Chinese are got a big curious for to own the Book what could make ten thousand men and women into brave martyrs. My husband, he are selling and selling and selling that Bible all up and down the country. There are no book like it, it are the best seller

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over everything else. But for me, I are liking best the Bible in the cellar. Will you honorably step to see it? ”

As in a dream Cynthia followed Amazing Grace down into the dark, damp hole in the earthen floor. Their only light was a thread of flickering flame from a little taper, but it was enough for her to see the book which Amazing Grace thrust into her hands—a little ugly warped Bible, burned and tattered at the edges, its cover loose, many of its pages gone. But she looked at it passionately, then very reverently she clasped it against her heart.

Afterward, alone in her room, she wrote out the story to send home to her family in time for Thanksgiving Day: “ For I think you’ll like to hear about the thankfullest place I’ve ever seen on earth, and perhaps when you are returning thanks for Pilgrims and turkeys and cranberry sauce you will open your Bibles at Daniel 11 : 32 and thank God all over again that even here in China ‘ *The people who do know their God shall be strong and do exploits.* ’ ”



TO THE PLAIN GRAY LADY

*Mary, Mary, Missionary,
How does your garden grow?
With reading spells by dear Blue Belles
And little maids all in a row!*

You will need a whole sheet of "old blue" cardboard to make your ten Blue Belles, since twenty dolls must be cut in order to make each Blue Belle from a pair of dolls by pasting together two heads and shoulders part way to the waist; for it will be the two sets of legs which will enable the Blue Belles to stand upright. Their feet, as you see, are unbound! Be sure to cut them very flat along the soles, as here indicated, for otherwise they cannot stand steadily.

Cut ovals of tan wrapping-paper and paste on the blue cardboard for faces. The flowers and head-bands may be of different colors for variety's sake, and you will find it fun to print the names of the Blue Belles on their backs: Goody Two Shoes, George, Fragrant Gentility, Silver Dew Drop are a few of the girls about whom stories are told in this book.

"Out of an indigo vat you can't draw white calico."

"If the root be neglected, what springs from it cannot be in good condition."

IX

TEN TINKLING BLUE BELLES

THE Blue Belles tinkled because of their bracelets and earrings and necklaces. It was tinkle-tinkle here, and tinkle-tinkle there, all day long wherever they went; and when the new pupils arrived (as arrive they did, in wheelbarrows, chairs, and on foot) it was hobble-hobble here, and hobble-hobble there, because their golden lilies were so tiny that they could not walk with anything but little mincing thumping steps—swaying like slender lilies; and if you are wondering why Cynthia called them “Blue Belles” here’s her letter home describing them:

“HONORABLE WEE SISTER, AND YOU, MY GLORIOUS BROTHER, PRECIOUS SCHOOLGOERS,
ALL:

“Little you dream what it really means to go to school, you pampered little pencil-users, you experienced ink-slingers, you wealthy book-owners, you swift word-readers, you brilliant print-understanders, I never dreamed myself

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how wealthy I had been in education until my Plain Gray Lady set me wise; for it seems that in China there are 70,000,000 children at this very moment old enough to go to school, but with schools large enough for 2,000,000 of them to attend. If you will put your subtractors to work on that problem you'll soon get 68,000,000 blue-cotton-trousered left-over children who have to go on living school-less, book-less, read-less, write-less lives!

“And that, of course, is quite too bad for every one in China, especially for the girls, since if anybody in a Chinese family is to be a school-goer, naturally the son is chosen. My Plain Gray Lady has, therefore, enlarged her school this year, and because my Chinese is still too ‘uneasy’ for me to do much else I’m to mother ten of the newest and bluest of the Blue Belles. Before they arrived I went dashing here, there, and everywhere, fixing their funny makeshift beds, which look for all the world like picnic tables at a fairground—just planks laid across wooden horses, with pieces of matting over the planks for the Blue Belles to lie on, and—blue-cotton quilts to cover them.

“‘Dear me!’ I said. ‘They’ll hate this!’

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“‘Dear no!’ laughed my very wise lady, ‘they’ll love this! For they sleep on wood or bricks at home, and this will seem quite fine enough, certainly far better than being turned away from school as they were last year.’ Like the Scotchman, yesterday I would have said, ‘I hae me douts.’ But today, today! I know better.

“For the little tinkling lassies have arrived, all in their charming blue-cotton trousers, beaming and bowing. It’s quite delicious to see how they love the Plain Gray Lady and Amazing Grace. They brought them gifts from home—colored eggs, melon-seeds, a bag of tea, an apple, beads. All very nice, indeed, but of course being an unexpected teacherette I would have had no gifts at all if one blue-trousered maiden had not suddenly thrust into my hand an astonishingly liquid gift.

“‘Oh, thank you! Thank you!’ I gasped, then whispered to Amazing Grace, ‘*what is it?*’

“She wrinkled her nose in an amused smile: ‘Hair-oil!’ she chuckled. ‘P’an-P’an do say how it make smooth the bad curl on your old-to-death hair!’

“‘*My old-to-death hair?*’ I asked.

“‘Very too much faded by venerably age,’

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Amazing Grace explained, her dear round face all smile.

“Oh, my American darlings! Fancy my feelings! For once upon a time a certain Harvard student wrote a lovely sonnet about my goldilocks, and now—this! ‘Old-to-death’?”

“But as I was saying, all has been excitement in our midst for two days, with the arrival of pupils, baggage, bundles, parents, and relatives even up to the third and fourth generation. These latter came escorting my ten special ‘heathen’ Blue Belles who were all as blue as indigo, feeling like strangers in a strange land. Abandoned. Deserted. Left at the mercy of all sorts of evil spirits. They wept into their rice-bowls at supper, and wailed upon their chopsticks and boo-hoed in all the dim corners.

“‘Exert your Bo-Peep charms,’ the Plain Gray Lady ordered: ‘we’ve never been able to have such a large delegation of brand new girls all at one time.’ But before I had a chance to see if my charms had any power perfect shrieks and howls arose from the ten poor girls.

“‘What is it now? What is it?’”

“It seems that some of the older girls had told them that they too would have to have their feet

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unbound. One aristocratic little girl in a peacock-green suit screamed that she would go straight home before she'd become a common big-foot-person. Not she! Never! Another girl sobbed frantically that she couldn't get home, she didn't know how to get there alone, it was so far off, it took days of travel, 'and if they make my feet big I'll never get a mother-in-law. Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo! What's the use of filling my stomach full of knowledge if I never get a mother-in-law?'

"I never dreamed that Amazing Grace could work such magic, but within an hour all ten of those weeping Blue Belles were rolled up like blue cocoons in their quilts, sleeping peacefully.

"Down-stairs, the three of us sat wearily. It had been our busiest day. My little Plain Gray Lady was telling God about it—I shall never forget the end of her prayer: 'Father, it is such an honor that You trust us with these little girls. We know You don't make heathen, only little—*children*. Give us such hands and hearts and voices that this little flock may see Who made us lovely! Give us such deeds, such thoughts, such words, that this little flock may follow where we lead. O make us shepherdesses indeed, that there

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may be one fold, one flock, one Shepherd, on earth—in China!—as in heaven. For Jesus' sake. Amen.'

"After such a prayer as that I went to bed the happiest girl in the world. Don't you envy

"Your own sister

CYN."

Cynthia had not supposed that such a large school could be taught by so few teachers, just the Plain Gray Lady, Amazing Grace, Beautiful Pearl (the sister of Amazing Grace), and Mr. Pepper.

Mr. Pepper came from the city every morning, the most surprising and surprised man in town. Surprising to Cynthia because he was so tremendously solemn in his large goggles, his long blue gown, and his exceedingly long finger-nails. If ever a man was a scholar to his finger-tips it was Mr. Pepper, for like many other Chinese scholars of the old type he had never cut his finger-nails, he even wore slender silver shields on them to show that he was All Brain and never did any work with his hands.

The Plain Gray Lady had to explain to Cynthia why he seemed so perpetually surprised. It seems that when she engaged him as a teacher

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he had supposed that of course he would teach boys, until a chance sentence showed him that the pupils were to be girls.

"It is no use," he said, wagging his head regretfully. "No use at all. Girls cannot learn."

"But they can! They will! They have! My school is full of bright girls. Perhaps you have been so busy reading the Chinese classics that you have not noticed my pupils. Or perhaps you have no children of your own?"

"Five mouths and one scholar," he answered.

"What do you mean by that?" she had asked, surprised in her turn.

"One son who can read, and five little less-than-nothing daughters," he sighed. "Just mouths. Just stomachs. Little 'lose-money-persons'! It's bad business raising girls for other people, for when I get them a mother-in-law apiece they won't belong to me any longer. A perfect waste of money."

The Plain Gray Lady argued with him. "I can make your daughters like sons!" she boasted finally.

"Excuse me! Pardon me!" said Mr. Pepper, looking deeply pained. "But it was the great Sage himself [Confucius] who teaches that

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'Women indeed are human beings, but they are of a lower order than men and can never attain to full equality with them.' He also said, *'A stupid woman is less troublesome in the family than a wise one.'* ”

But Mr. Pepper, although so sad and so certain, was finally persuaded to accept the post of writing teacher, and he even agreed to bring his five girl “mouths” with him each day. Very down-in-the-corner mouths they were, just at first, because all five little Peppers were quite sure that they could never get this thing called knowledge.

But all of a sudden little Pearl Pepper began to feel wisdom buzzing inside her head! Cinnamon Flower felt it next; then little Miss Beautiful Peace came down with a real attack of enthusiasm: “I can read! I know that character!”

“Tut! Tut!” said Silver Moon loftily, “I also know it!”

The fifth little Pepper drooped her lips: “I must be very stupid! I can't fix any of these great thoughts in my miserable stomach.”

“I told you so!” warned Mr. Pepper. But of course he began to see that if four of the five could do it, Number Five might manage also.

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And always he kept reminding himself of Grandmother Gate-Woman.

For of all secrets this was the most surprising in China. Old Grandmother Gate-Woman opened and closed the school gate. She was very, very old, and very, very poor, and very, very cross. Like Mr. Pepper she had considered the school a huge joke. I am afraid that at first she quite overlooked the goodness of the Plain Gray Lady in giving her the position. For Grandmother Gate-Woman had had a sad history. Only a little while before this story opens there had been twenty-four persons living under her roof-tree: sons, daughters-in-law, grandsons, granddaughters. She had ruled them with a high hand as only grandmothers can rule, in China.

But suddenly one morning there were only twenty-three of them to rule, for one of them had died in the night from "Heavenly Blossoms" (small-pox). And in spite of tying red rags around the small-pox goddess, the next day there were only twenty-two living under that roof-tree. Moreover each new day the numbers kept on dwindling: twenty—nineteen—sixteen—thirteen—ten—nine—seven—five—four—three—two—

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until finally only Grandmother Gate-Woman was left. Very old. Very feeble. Very broken-hearted. With no rice in the rice-pot. No fire-faggots for the stove. Slowly she starved and froze for nine dreadful days, when the Plain Gray Lady happened to hear of her.

“Venerable Old Aunt,” she said politely, “if you will burn your clothes, which may have Heavenly Blossoms germs in them, and consent to wash yourself in hot water with this amber germ-killing liquid, then I will be glad to have you act as Gate-Woman for my school.”

It took a peck of persuasion to get the old woman to dip in that pound of prevention: “Wash? At my age? Unsafe! Unsafe! I have never had a bath. I would die!”

“But won’t you also die without rice and fire-faggots?”

“Sadly, sadly true!” agreed the puzzled old creature. But at last she decided to wash! She burned her faded old clothes and put on the new wadded garments. She sat at the gate of the school as guardian of the girls inside. But she always laughed at those girls.

“Girls can’t really read!” she would jeer, her wee dried-up face very cross. “It’s just magic.”

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“But we can read! And it isn’t magic, at all! Listen to us.”

“Pouf! Pouf!” the old woman would puff, provoked to find herself wrong, but little by little she began to wish that she were only young enough to read too.

It was about this time that Cynthia thought of the secret. As best she could she told it to her ten special Blue Belles. They tinkled and giggled, and scampered to the gate. They whispered in the ears of Grandmother Gate-Woman. And every day after that there was a strange sight to see: always one Blue Belle studying side by side with that old woman. Telling her how Mr. Pepper had drawn picture-letters in writing class that morning. Telling her how Amazing Grace had taught them this fact and the Plain Gray Lady that fact. It was, of course, wonderful practise for them; and equally wonderful practise for the old woman. But in order to keep it a secret, the lessons could only happen in the afternoon when the Plain Gray Lady went visiting in town, from house to house.

“Tell me this character again?” Grandmother Gate-Woman would ask.

“That means ‘happiness,’ Grandmother.”

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The old woman held the character close up to her dim eyes: "Happiness! Happiness! Happiness!" she whispered, poking her finger on the word. "Well, well! here it is again in God's Letter! And here! And here!" (For she was reading the fifth chapter of Matthew, where the Beatitudes appear. Perhaps you can figure out which one of them the Blue Belle read to her next.)

"Fine, Grandmother! And this is what God's Letter says to you today: '*The humble-hearted ones have happiness because the heavenly country is theirs.*'"

"Kindly said! Kindly said!" nodded the old woman. Then she shut her eyes, swaying back and forth in her stiff chair intoning over and over: "The humble-hearted ones have happiness—the humble-hearted ones have happiness—why, this is all about me, isn't it, Cinnamon Flower?"

You can see for yourself what a strange secret this was for Cynthia to have started: an old woman reading God's Letter, taught by a young, young scholar; both of them heathen—for a while.

But there came a Sunday when Grandmother Gate-Woman went to church. She liked it. She

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liked the simple sermon preached by Pastor Peace, the brother of Amazing Grace. The next Sunday she brought her old-time neighbors to sit beside her. The third Sunday she brought the next-door neighbors of those other neighbors. By the fourth Sunday there were so many of them that the Plain Gray Lady was astonished, and the secret came out!

“Whatever has come over old Grandmother Gate-Woman?” she whispered between the hymn and the sermon.

Cynthia laughed softly: “Ten Tinkling Blue Belles have come over her!” she whispered back.

But neither of them guessed what an interesting ending this secret was to have. For Grandmother Gate-Woman grew disgusted with her little Blue Belle teachers.

“What?” she would exclaim. “You know enough to teach me, but not enough to teach yourselves? You still think that wooden idols are worth worshiping? Ai ya, you make me sick. Here I am, very old and stupid, but I’ve become an inviter. It’s all I can do yet, I just invite people and invite people and invite people to come to hear this new save-the-world-doctrine. But you have two superior over-the-ocean ladies to watch

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all day long! Yet you haven't begun inviting anybody. Bah! Bah! Girls are indeed useless affairs. Useless! Useless! At least, you could be inviters!"

The Blue Belles looked stunned. They stood up very straight. They looked very prim. Very severe. They had had no idea what an upsetting thing their simple secret was threatening to become. But every day they could not help but discover new things about it, for almost any time of the day you could see Grandmother Gate-Woman poke her head through the gate and call to the passing pedlers, chair-bearers, barbers, candy-sellers: "Bend your ear! Bend your ear! An old woman has a secret. God has written you a Letter—listen——"

Through the little grating of the gate she would pass on her secret to anybody who would stop! look! listen! And because she was such an "inviter" the little chapel grew fuller and fuller from Sunday to Sunday.

She had another secret scheme. For page by page, sheet by sheet, Grandmother Gate-Woman began handing out bits of God's Letter to her listeners. Perhaps you do not know that all China considers printed paper sacred; it is never

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to be dropped carelessly on the street; never to be left lying there to be stepped on, rudely. Therefore if the butchers, the bakers, the candle-stick-makers refused to stop! look! listen! when Grandmother Gate-Woman called to them she had her own secret scheme—she simply poked a sheet of paper through the grating so that it might flutter to the cobblestones outside.

But it never altogether reached the ground, for some one would be sure to pick it up, some one would be sure to carry it home, and of course Grandmother Gate-Woman hoped that that some one would read it. You might almost say that she herself went home with each page of her scattered Bible, for she was often heard praying: “It’s just Your old Gate-Woman again, God. Now quickly, quickly, God, help them to understand that page! Softly, softly, God, step into their hearts! Gently, gently, God, make the doctrine precious! It’s just Your old Gate-Woman talking. Amen.”

Do you wonder Cynthia felt that she had really begun her Shepherdess work when her secret had turned out so beautifully? And before six months were over there came a night when several of the Blue Belles knelt in a row by the

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side of a one-planked bed, while their China Shepherdess sang her prayer in English over their dear little pig-tailed backs:

*Saviour, like a Shepherd, lead us,
Much we need Thy tender care,
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use Thy fold prepare.*



If one little home-made star could make such a stir in China perhaps you will send some others to China yourself, hoping that they too may go and stand "over the place where the young child lay." In any case you will want to turn a Blue Belle (see Chapter IX for story and pattern) into a Cradle-That-Walks-On-Two-Feet by tying a red-coated baby on a Blue Belle's back, since sisters in China are the most obliging perambulators to be found anywhere.

世に星は月を助けず
月も星を助けず。

"A star, however willing, cannot help the moon."

"When the heron and the oyster seize each other the fisherman reaps the benefit."

"A poor man dwells unnoticed in the market-place; a rich man will be visited by his distant relatives though living in the far-off hills."

X

THE STAR THAT WAS STOLEN BY THE THREE UN-WISE MEN OF THE EAST

WHEN the Three Un-wise Men of the East discovered what it was that they had stolen, they were completely bewildered! And if *they* were astonished, one wonders how Bob Drummond would have felt, for it was he who had made the star: from gilt paper and cardboard and paste he had made it one rainy day, and he even printed a verse on it in the neatest of lettering, fully intending to take it to church to be packed in the Christmas-box which the Juniors were filling for Cynthia. But when one owns the Best Forgettery in America it is the easiest thing in the world never to remember again about Christmas or boxes for China. So off went the box, and here in America stayed the little gilt star forlornly stretching its five gold arms in the darkest corner of Bob's desk. But, of course, in time he discovered it there, and instantly his forgettery gave a prodigious click—goodness; this, *this* was the star

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he had made to twinkle on top of Cynthia's first Chinese Christmas tree! With admirable reasoning he decided that more than one box could reach China, so he sat down and wrote Cynthia a letter:

"DEAR SIN:

"I made you a star. Its in a box. Put it on your tree if you want to. We like your letters a lot. Dad gave one to the minister. He read it allowed in church and people smiled. A laddy said to me your sister has a cents of umer. But dont feel badly over this, she ment all write, you know how laddies are.

"When I was littler I spelt so awful I couldnt tell pirate from parrot but now Ive learnt a lot off you Sin. I hop you wont meat another parrot on the river. He must have scart you styff; Barbra cryed over that parrot pie story. Shes so little, she thought the pie was made of a cookt parrot, see? I told her parrots didnt get cookt themself, they just cookt others. She said she hopped they woodnt cook you Sin. Well a merry Xmas to you Sin from

"Your lovely bro., "BOB."

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So off his star went, traveling by itself, but neither Bob nor the postman nor the three Un-wise Men ever dreamed what a stir that star would create.

And certainly, remembering what it was made of, you would not suppose it could possibly have been such a terrific temptation to the sailors on that little river house-boat carrying mail to all the towns along the way. But, after all, it was the most natural thing in the world for them to peer enviously inside the cabin and look at those bundles—fat ones, thin ones, long ones, short ones—more than could be counted on the fingers of ten hands.

Said the youngest Un-wise Man (and he was only thirteen, with the startling name of Celestial Obedience!): “When we reach the City of Clouds, it will be the naming day for the new baby of my cousin Tai Fah Min, and I shall lose face if I have nothing to give to the child for good luck.”

“Only too true!” sighed the second Un-wise Man sympathetically.

“I am tired of being such a miserably unnoticed relative,” complained poor Celestial Obedience. “Here I go traveling to marvelous places,

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but what glory do I bring back to startle my relatives? They say, 'Bah, the gods have stolen away his wits!' I shall be the most insignificant worm in town without a present for this baby."

"Here! Hear!" groaned the other Un-wise Man with his eyes fastened on the cabin door, as if inside could be found the remedy to keep him from "losing face." So of course you see how it came to pass that with so many packages on board, the littlest of them (chosen because small parcels are often most precious, and this one rattled enticingly) could be sneaked up a blue-cotton sleeve without any one's being the wiser.

And on the twenty-fourth day of December their boat bumped against the banks of the City of Clouds, where the China Shepherdess impatiently waited while a coolie piled her boxes on the mission wheelbarrow and then trundled them hastily off where a certain tree stood waiting—bare, but hopeful!

Meanwhile the Three Un-wise Men slipped quietly away to the naming party of Celestial Obedience's cousin's baby. Such a party! Every possible neighbor and relative was squeezed inside that little house, each armed with a good-luck present. The astonished baby nearly stared

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his eyes out when the Solemn Aunt pulled on his head a crimson-satin cap trimmed with tiny looking-glasses. "This," said she, "will keep the evil spirits away from your honorable new head, since no spirit has ever been able to look at himself in a mirror."

Next came the Sickly Aunt, hobbling up with a pair of slippers with cats' paws fastened on the toes. "To keep your glorious feet from stumbling," she croaked in her husky voice.

And all this time, Celestial Obedience stood in the doorway noticing that the baby's mother was not really liking any of the presents. "Almost as if she had no fear of spirits," thought he. "Strange if she should like my present best."

But before he could get near enough a Very Pompous Uncle hung over the baby's head a picture of a hideous green devil beating a red gong. "This," thundered the Uncle, "will drive away the evil spirits."

"Um-m-m!" murmured the admiring relatives, the little mother looking doubtful. Then a Stingy Cousin brought a red string. "It may seem a mere trifle," she simpered, "but tie it over the gate-post and the baby will never get prickly heat—never! I've tried it with all of mine."

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This kept up until finally the two older Un-wise Men pushed Celestial Obedience forward to make his little speech. "Illustrious and never-to-be-equaled child," he said, bowing profusely, "your stupid sailor cousin brings you a trifling nothing from the distant places of the Middle Flowery Kingdom."

"Mercy on us," gasped the aunts and uncles, "if here isn't that wretched Celestial Obedience giving the baby something in a box!"

"All this traveling up and down the river has done the boy good—quite a speech, wasn't it?"

"Get out of my way," ordered a rich and peevish relative, "how can I see what's in that fellow's box when you block the view?"

"Don't you suppose I'm curious, too?" snapped the obstacle.

All of this was very pleasant for Celestial Obedience to overhear—noticed at last he was!

Meanwhile the baby's mother was untying the string and ripping off the paper. It must be admitted that Celestial Obedience was as curious as she to know the contents.

"The string is red—that's a good sign," commented a cousin.

"The box is red, too. Oh, very good luck."

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“And something rattles inside! I declare the boy has outdone himself—he will be rice-less for a year on account of this extravagance. Oh, look! look! there it is! But what is it?”

Oh, yes, that was the burning question—what was this gold thing with five sharp points? The uncles did not know. The aunts did not know. The cousins did not know. Certainly Celestial Obedience did not know.

But the quiet little mother gave one astonished look, then cried radiantly: “A star! I do declare—a star!”

“What’s it *for*, stupid creature?” asked her husband impatiently.

“I—only—know,” she gasped, “that—the—winter—I—went—to—the—Christians’ School—they—talked—about—a—star.”

“Ah—ha!” hissed the uncles and aunts in a dreadful chorus, turning savagely on poor Celestial Obedience, “how dare you bring ill luck on a poor innocent baby by giving him something Christian? Bah, you dangerous fellow, here’s his silly mother been bewitched all these years because of spending a few weeks with those foreign devils. Put him outdoors, the half-witted idiot!”

His grandness oozed away in a sorry trickle.

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What a horror! To have happened to steal something so utterly inappropriate. No wonder the grandparents were provoked, and the uncles and cousins and aunts. He hung his head.

But the two other Un-wise Men poked him in the ribs. "Don't lose your face!" they whispered, and one of them said aloud: "It passes understanding how you fail to notice the poor boy's kindness! Didn't he go all the way to Shanghai for this treasure? Of course he did! And didn't he drag it through perils of robbers and rapids? Of course he did! And isn't this season and this weather a time when men hug the shore? Bah, his bravery is colossal. He did what only grown men do, all for the good of his little new cousin's present."

"Big words! But what's his present for? Speak up!" the others cried. The poor Un-wise Man scratched his head and glared hopelessly at the third Un-wise Man. The third Un-wise Man cocked his head on one side and thought deeply. Then in a sepulchral tone he said: "We dare not tell you *all*, but this we *can* say—it is a secret, specially beneficial to babies born at this season of the year. He will be sure to grow up wiser and braver and stronger than any other child in

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town, all on account of this star which Celestial Obedience went through tortures to procure."

"It must be very stiff magic!" they said.

"Very stiff!" agreed Celestial Obedience.

"Wouldn't do to tell the secret," said the Unwise Man. "Once speak it in the air and the upper-air demons would overhear—and then, misfortune!"

"Just so!" agreed the party soberly. "And where should we put this superlative magic?"

Instantly the Pompous Uncle replied, "Put it over my green demon, of course; then the star can watch the demon and the demon can watch the gong and the gong can scare away the evil spirits—what could possibly happen to the child *then?*"

What, indeed! But surely Bob Drummond would have gasped to see the reverent ceremony with which his little star was fastened on the wall, while the baby stared round-eyed at the Unwise Men, until the youngest of them felt uncomfortable inside, and lay down to sleep that night wondering in his heart of hearts about that star—what sort of a thing was it, anyhow?

The baby's mother wondered, too. Dim memories flickered and died out. It was so long

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ago (nine years) since she had spent those months in school, and what with whippings and sneerings and jeerings, all she used to know had been almost forgotten. Almost, but not quite. So the next morning she took the piece of paper in which the box had been wrapped, and fastened it to the outer gate-post, so that the stamps and the writing showed.

“O very far-away God of the Christians,” she prayed, “they may keep me indoors like a slave under their roof-tree, they may whip me for remembering all the little odds and ends of learning, but oh! let something come of this paper on the gate!”

And something did.

For Cynthia, hurrying down that street on the morning of December twenty-fifth, was amazed to see her own name and address attached to a gate-post, written in the plainest kind of American-boy penmanship. Needless to say she went indoors. And needless to say she did not hurry out. There was too much to hear and tell.

“But how *wonderful!*” she cried as they handed her the star which should have been her own. “See for yourselves that the star has somehow come where it belongs, for on it is a

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Bible verse which plainly says, '*And the star came and stood over where the young child lay.*' To think you have a Christmas Baby in your home—a little Jesus-Christ-Child, the very first I've seen in town. Oh, such an honor! You must be very happy."

"W-we are!" stammered the gratified grandparents.

"But you must show me how to bring up such a special kind of child," the mother begged.

"That's what I came to China for," Cynthia smiled, thankful that God uses even Un-wise Men and little cardboard stars to bring peace on earth, good will to men.



A brown or gray shoe-box (or hat-box, if you want something still larger) will make a fine home for the Peppers. The bottom will form the floor, and doors like shutters may be cut to swing on the uncut parts like hinges (until the Oculist steals it). Paint a door-god on the inside of each panel in gorgeous colors. Perhaps you could model an idol from moulding clay for use in Chapter XVI. A shoe-button will form the door-knob—punch the shank through the cardboard and use a small safety pin to fasten it on the back side.

To secure an even pattern for the roof, fold a piece of newspaper, and starting from the fold draw one-half the roof. Cut this out, unfold, and spread on bright-green cardboard. Trace the outline, and cut out two roofs. Before fastening these in place, it will be necessary to slit down each corner of the box about an inch. Bend the front and back wall inward for that half inch and clamp the green roof to this slanting inner support with brass paper fasteners. It will be necessary to cut away triangles of the projecting side walls. Be sure to have the eaves overhang the front and back walls. The tops of the roof may now be brought together into a ridge and either sewed or glued or clamped, then painted black. Tiling may be indicated by a few curving strokes. Why not have a whole street of houses? What fun to point out the House of the Stolen Star (Chapter X), of the Vacuum-cleaning Pig (Chapter XIV), of Deacon Ding (Chapter XXI), etc., etc.

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"Happiness and trouble stand at every one's gate; yours is the choice which you will invite in."

"Nobody's family can hang out the sign, 'Nothing the matter here.'"

"Water which is distant is no good for a fire which is near."

XI

THE LOST-AND-FOUND FRONT DOOR

YOU must admit that there is nothing quite like a front door. In America it shuts out everybody. And a front door in China is like our doors, only much more so! For there is that little matter of evil spirits who must also be shut out. Especially at New Year's time. It is bad enough all the year round, as you already know: so bad that devil screens guard every front door on the outside while paper door-gods painted in gorgeous reds and greens guard the inside. But at New Year's time there has been so much housecleaning going on beforehand that every evil spirit in all China goes house-hunting for some quiet nook or cranny to rest his little invisible heels! Almost, you feel sorry for him, don't you? Until you remember the spiteful, frightful things he is supposed to do to human beings—sickness and poverty; burnt food and poor crops; a fire that smokes; eyes that see dimly; teeth with such an ache that you can fairly feel that little spirit pattering from tooth to tooth, sitting in a down-

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stairs tooth to kick up its heels in glee, then scampering to an up-stairs tooth to go to bed for the night, causing the whole cheek to puff and puff and puff!

Surely you realize now about the charms on chimneys, and the shoot-the-chutes of the curving rooftops. And always at New Year's time you would realize also the preciousness of the front door.

Therefore, consider the horror of the Five Little Peppers when on New Year's Eve the front door of their home had disappeared! For once, at least, the feelings of these Blue Belles matched their garments. Blue as indigo, they were; both they and their brother, their uncles, their aunts, their parents, their grandparents. For this was a calamity! A family simply dared not start a New Year without a door. Every evil spirit in the Middle Flowery Kingdom would come crushing and rushing inside. The family would lose all their money, they would starve, they would be sick, they would die! You can see for yourself why they were blue.

Grandfather Pepper spoke up. He was so deaf that he spoke far louder than was necessary, and his voice boomed out in a truly terrific fash-

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ion. (The five Blue Belle Peppers did wish that he would whisper.) "Who," he demanded sternly, "who in this family owes a debt?"

Ah, that was it! Only one thing made doors disappear on New Year's Eve—a debt. For anybody to whom you owed money felt a perfect right to steal away your door, knowing only too well that you would pay that debt by hook or by crook at once in order to safeguard your premises from the home-seeking demons swarming in the outer air on New Year's.

"Who owes a debt?" boomed grandfather.

"Not I!" said one Uncle Pepper.

"Nor I!" said a second.

"Nor I!" said a third.

"Nor I!" said our own Mr. Pepper, the scholar, he with the goggles and finger shields.

"Now think!" boomed grandfather. "Your mind is so often off with the ancients. Think! Have you not bought one of the four jewels of a scholar—paper, brushes, inkslab, ink—and left it unpaid for?"

"No, no!" said Mr. Pepper, wagging his head. Whereupon every Uncle Pepper looked accusingly at every Aunt Pepper: "How about you, Inside Person?"

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But the aunts wagged their heads. No, not they!

It was a perfectly awful occasion. Where, oh, where was the door? And who, oh, who had stolen it? There was only one thing to do, and they did it by standing in the doorless doorway tossing off firecrackers into the air, ten or twelve to each minute, for evil spirits have a perfect horror of noise. They pick up their invisible heels and dash madly away. Suddenly in the midst of the terrific din our own Mr. Pepper clapped his hand to his forehead and cried: "I've got it! I know!"

"Speak louder!" boomed grandfather.

Our Mr. Pepper yelled into his father's ear: "It's these spectacles, Ancient and Honorable; I owe the Oculist."

"Mercy on us!" screamed his Inside Person (wife) almost fainting, while the Blue Belles hung their heads for shame to think that it was Papa Pepper causing all the trouble.

Grandfather exploded with wrath. The uncles exploded their firecrackers. Mr. Pepper went dashing off through the darkness with a bobbing paper lantern to the home of the Oculist, with a string of cash to pay his bill. And all this time

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Cynthia lay wide-awake in bed startled by the awful noises everywhere: "Like five Fourths of July rolled in one! Less than ever do I believe in this Firecracker Insurance Company!" she complained to the ceiling. But the ceiling looked flatly disapproving as if about to say: "It's happened on New Year's for hundreds of years. It will keep on for hundreds more. Grin and bear it." "I will not grin!" vowed Cynthia.

Meanwhile Mr. Pepper had reached the Oculist's home and found him celebrating noisily. "Here is the cash for my glasses, you ungracious person. Why did you not let me know I was in your debt? I would gladly have paid you."

"Let you know?" roared the Oculist crossly. "Haven't I *been* letting you know? Haven't I come telling you that my rice-bowl was empty, that my children were starving, that my poor aged parents were falling into their very coffins from hunger and cold? Pouf! Told you, indeed! I've done nothing but tell you. But you keep your nose in a book and your mind in the dim past. Oculists' stomachs mean nothing to you. Oculists' parents mean noth——"

"Oh, c-come n-now, stammered Mr. Pepper regretfully, "I'm not quite so bad as that.

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Here's your cash, my poor fellow. Truly I am sadly forgetful. Truly repentant. Now give me my front door, please."

"All gone! Cut up for kindling wood! Burned in the oven! All gone!" clucked the Oculist indifferently.

"Do not use up the air with such pleasantries," begged Mr. Pepper. "It is necessary for me to have glasses because I am a professor at the Heavenly Education-Instilling School. I have many weighty matters on my mind. Many problems. I apologize for my thoughtlessness. But now please, magnanimously, graciously, condescend to return to me my door."

"Gone up in smoke! All gone!"

"But you only took it this afternoon—how could it be burned already? Surely you are simply making holiday sport with me. Yet think, I pray you, of my old father at home, terrified; my old mother, pale with fear——"

"Indeed! Do you say it? Well, even so was my own father terrified of starving, and my own mother pale from fear of being roofless. Yet you turned deaf ears to my bills. So now gently, gently, be gone."

"My one bill could not feed your parents long!

THE LOST-AND-FOUND FRONT DOOR

One small pair of glasses could not make a roof-tree fall. Come now, give me my door," begged Mr. Pepper.

"The door? What door? How you talk! I burned it, I tell you. Gently, gently, be gone, so that I may start my New Year's celebration. See, the moon is rising. It is not good luck to be arguing any longer. Please trouble me no more. I must burn my last year's door-god and paste up a new one."

And before Mr. Pepper knew what was happening, he was wandering the street with his little pale lantern, listening to the boom of giant firecrackers and seeing cascades of fireworks lighting the sky. Just as he was feeling the most desperate he glanced up at the Heavenly Education-Instilling School. There was a light in an upper room. Perhaps the Honorable Principal could help him, for he seemed to lack courage to go home. It is true that he might "lose face" by appealing to a woman; but alas! he would lose just as much if the door were not saved.

He knocked at the gate. But old Grandmother Gate-Woman slept soundly. It seemed unbelievable to him that she who, last year, had set off firecrackers with her neighbors, should now

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feel safe enough to sleep without firecracker insurance. But he was much too dignified to give any further consideration to a mere stupid old woman, even when at last she came clumping to the gate to let him in.

Cynthia came down-stairs first. He explained his tragic situation: *no front door!* "That's too bad," she said sympathetically, "for it's so cold."

"Cold?" he echoed, surprised. "Cold doesn't matter. It's the New Year's demons seeking new homes."

Cynthia was puzzled, but the Plain Gray Lady coming into the room understood only too well: "My heart is heavy for you, Mr. Pepper," she said. "You had told me that you were an earnest inquirer about my save-the-world-doctrine. You told me that such words as the Bible contains were rare in China, that they very much entered into you."

"Truly! Truly!" he bowed. "But will the Honorable Christian God guard the door? On New Year's?"

"I think I will go home with you right now and try to open up this doctrine more plainly to your family, Mr. Pepper." And a few minutes later, under the stars and the moon, a little pro-

THE LOST-AND-FOUND FRONT DOOR

cession followed after Mr. Pepper's lantern as he hurried to his doorless home. The firecrackers were still booming. Grandfather still booming, also, in disgust.

The five blue little Blue Belles clung to Cynthia's knees: "Oh, Shepherdess! Shepherdess!" they sobbed.

The Plain Gray Lady stood up very straight and serious: "I have brought you a Door," she said.

"What is this over-the-ocean woman saying?" boomed grandfather.

"She says she has brought us a door!" shouted the family in a chorus, looking at the little lady expecting to see a real door appear in her empty hands. They offered her a seat. After all the proper persuasion she consented to sit in it.

"If I were you," she said, "I would tack up a quilt over the door-opening to protect it until morning." This was such a sensible plan that a heavy quilt was soon in place. Then the Plain Gray Lady told her story of the God-Who-Is-A-Door. "I am the door," He had said of Himself. She explained very carefully what this meant. She also quoted from the Hundred and Twenty-

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first Psalm: "The Lord shall preserve thy coming in and thy going out from this day forth, even forevermore." She told them about America, where nobody worried at all about evil spirits. She told them that the only evil spirit in the world is the spirit of envy and hatred and sin in a person's own heart.

"I have been in China twenty years," she said. "I used to live in a town where the people loved me, then a few years ago I came here where every one seemed to hate me, at first. Yet I was safe. Jesus Christ, the Door, stood between me and dangers. He can stand between you and dangers. For the God who made the air and the water, made you too."

"It sounds very good," boomed Grandfather. "Tell us again."

The Plain Gray Lady told them again. The Five Little Peppers dared to put in a word sometimes, themselves, until their father felt actually proud of the wisdom they seemed to have stored in their heads. Whole verses of Bible came tripping glibly off their tongues! "You have made my daughters almost as good as sons," he acknowledged. The Five Little Peppers tried to look demure. And succeeded!

THE LOST-AND-FOUND FRONT DOOR

Along toward morning there was a great commotion heard just outside the quilt hanging at the door-way. When the family hurried out to see what was the matter they were simply overcome to see the Spectacle-Selling Oculist with three coolies and a door. *The* door! The Oculist was very meek. He looked rather sheepish. It was Grandmother Gate-Woman who did most of the talking:

“Well, here’s the door! I went and got it. After Mr. Pepper left the school last night I thought maybe God wanted Mr. Pepper to have his door, so I just went over to the Oculist and gave him a good talking to! A woman of my age has *some* privileges, I hope! The very idea—stealing a door. Any door. At any time. It says in God’s Letter, ‘Thou shalt not steal.’ Well, here’s the door!”

Mr. Pepper looked perfectly thunderstruck. He actually had to swallow before he found his voice: “But what made you do it? You don’t know me. I’ve never troubled to speak to you. And you don’t know my family at all.”

“Why yes, I do,” Grandmother Gate-Woman chuckled, pointing a merry thumb at each of the Peppers in turn. “You’re God’s child, and

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you're God's child, and you, and you, and you! Well, I'm God's child too. So that makes us brothers and sisters. I thought I had lost all my family, but now just look at me! *Everybody* belongs to me! And if a brother of mine wants a door which another brother of mine has stolen, I just go and get it. See?"

But the Peppers simply could not see.

"Oh, well, I don't wonder you're surprised. I haven't known it myself very long. But only yesterday I spelled a verse out of God's Letter. It said, '*Am I my brother's keeper?*' 'No, Lord, I'm not,' I answered, 'but I will be if You'll please show me how.' And last night God showed me about the door. That's all! See?"

But the Peppers really could not see. They still looked stunned. Grandmother Gate-Woman chuckled again. "It's really a sort of a joke, if you look at it one way. You see, I'm such a dull stupid old woman that I can't fix God's Letter in my mind unless I trot right off and practise it on somebody. See?"

And still nobody saw! "*Stupid?*" thought Cynthia, amazed. "Stupid? This dear brave old saint trudging through dark Chinese streets at midnight to demand a stranger's front door

THE LOST-AND-FOUND FRONT DOOR

from another stranger? Surely here is one of God's great flaming apostles!"

So it was a wonderful New Year's Day for everybody after all. The Peppers dressed in their new clothes and called on all their friends. The Blue Belles stuffed all day long on peanuts and candy and melon-seeds. They blew whistles and played games. They collected the big red calling-cards left by the visitors who came to see them. In fact, it was almost like any other New Year's Day. Almost; but not quite. For although Grandfather burned the door-god, he did not burn any spirit money with it to insure a good report of himself in the upper air. Neither did he paste up a new door-god as he always had done on other New Years. So that you can see how the front door of a Chinese Christian becomes converted with the rest of the family!



You can see for yourself that two horns was not the kind of "wee, modest timid beastie" about which Bobbie Burns once wrote a poem. You can make a very presentable water buffalo for this story if you ask your grocer for a cardboard advertisement of the Horlick's Malted Milk cow. Paste extra half-moon horns in place and paint the whole animal a dark shaggy gray in streaks, with a Buffalo Bill perched on its back. Make the poor orphan boy as patched as possible.

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"Do not lace your boots in a melon field or adjust your hat under a plum tree if you would avoid suspicion."

"The insect can fly but ten paces, but in the tail of a noble steed he can go a thousand miles."

"The locust chases the cicada, ignorant that the yellow bird is after it."

XII

THE HEART OF BUFFALO BILL WAS FIVE-JACKETS-COLD

NOTHING is more uncomfortable than to be five-jackets-cold in China without the five jackets to wear. Once upon a time Buffalo Bill could have had all the jackets he pleased: on the coldest five-coat-days he would put on one, he would put on two, he would put on three, and then with difficult wriggings and stretchings he would manage to squeeze into jackets number four and five; until what had been originally a thin little pillar of a boy became a regular pillow. So plump that his arms would not move, and so fat that he could hardly bend to see his toes. But that was long ago before *Feng Shui* brought such bad luck to his rooftree.

On this particular day Buffalo Bill looked exactly like a little smoking chimney in the freezing morning air. He thrashed around with his arms like an awkward scarecrow in a heavy wind as he tried to keep warm, for he was reduced to wearing only one thin blue-cotton jacket; his nose

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grew so red that you might have feared it would worry Two Horns, the buffalo, except for the fact that nothing about Buffalo Bill could possibly frighten Two Horns, and neither could anything about the fierce Two Horns possibly frighten Buffalo Bill. But that is not saying that neither of them could not frighten Miss Cynthia Bo-Peep! No indeed! For you are soon to see that charming young lady running a Marathon race which still seems to her like one long wild nightmare.

You are therefore to picture Buffalo Bill smoking like a little chimney as his breath rose in the chilly air, while he himself crouched down beside the giant body of Two Horns, who lay in the half-frozen meadow looking exactly like a great brown boulder. He was so pleasantly warm that Buffalo Bill was almost asleep with the comfort of it, when suddenly he jumped up awakened by a most peculiar noise. The noise was Cynthia, singing as she took a short cut across the fields on her way to visit the Handkerchief Family whom you met a little while ago.

Cynthia was very happy because she had parroted so much Chinese that at last the Plain Gray Lady could send her on errands alone! She

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began to feel as Bo-Peep must have felt when the tails returned to her sheep! She could not sing too loudly or rejoice too heartily. Besides, was she not all alone?

Imagine her astonishment, therefore, when she saw steam rising from behind a giant boulder. "Dear me, some one has built a fire over there, I'd better keep quiet," for of course it might be thieves or bandits—or—pirates on land. Softly she walked on her way, watching the steam cautiously until she saw a little tattered boy rise up from behind the boulder and begin to thrash around with his arms like a scarecrow in a gale or a windmill in Holland. One cannot be afraid of little Chinese boys as comical as that, so Cynthia sang a greeting across the field to him: "Have you eaten your rice?" since this is the politest possible way to say "How do you do?" in China.

"Have eaten," mumbled the startled Buffalo Bill, for it was not altogether pleasant to be awakened from sleep by a strange she-person marching over toward him. He began to feel very shy. Now of course you are prepared for what is coming, aren't you? Cynthia, walking toward a rock to practise Chinese on a little boy!

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Cynthia, wearing the jolliest red sweater ever knit by any college girl, with a long red muffler streaming east and west from her shoulders!

The bashful boy grew so embarrassed that he kicked the rock with his foot. The rock arose. The rock, of course, was Two Horns! Two Horns took one lazy glance at the red she-person advancing, then grew positively enchanted.

For her part, Cynthia took one look at this rock which suddenly had four legs, a lashing tail, and great horns curving like a new moon, then Cynthia, I regret to state, grew positively panic-y with the vision. She began to run.

The rock-on-legs began to run after her. Buffalo Bill began to run after the rock-on-legs. Any one with sufficient leisure could have quoted the Chinese proverb, "*The locust chases the cicada ignorant that the yellow bird is after it.*" But there was no leisure in the world just then, for Buffalo Bill was yelling wildly: "Halt! Halt!"

Two Horns was chortling with glee. Halt? now? with all this jolly fun? Not much! It made no difference how hard little boys pulled his tail he merrily chased the red lady, dragging the little boys after him pell-mell. Or was it just

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one little boy? For he recognized the loved voice. He turned his head and bellowed pleasantly: "Don't spoil my fun, old pal!" It was this trifling delay alone which saved Cynthia. Somehow or other she clambered frantically up a stone wall, so high that she could safely look down at Two Horns as he champed on the ground below her.

Buffalo Bill looked up at the lady. Surely this was the friend of his Handkerchief-Giver. He bowed.

"Bad boy!" called Cynthia. "Go lose your head at once!"

He had never been so astonished in his life. What ingratitude was this? Hadn't he run and run and run? Why must he lose his head? For of course he had no way of knowing that the lady was so new in China that her words grew frightfully jumbled, especially with buffalo bulls charging at her. "Go lead off your bull," was what she supposed she had said.

Buffalo Bill climbed up on the back of Two Horns. He looked as proud as haughty sultans might on elephants.

"Go lose your head!" called Cynthia again, waving her hand to shoo him away.

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He had never felt so insulted. Poor little lonely fellow, nobody loved him anyhow; but after trying to save a lady's life it was hard luck to earn such ingratitude! He poked Two Horns in the special fashion which meant, "Turn around." Two Horns turned. He poked in the code meaning, "Gallop!" Two Horns galloped; until in five minutes Cynthia saw them like mere specks in the distance. "That nice little fellow!" she thought gratefully. "And how well I ran! How well I climbed! Above all, how well I spoke Chinese under difficulties! I'm improving."

Which only goes to prove that boasters never see themselves as others see them. For certainly Buffalo Bill had his own private opinion about her. He hardly knew whether to be enraged or enchanted when she came a few days later to present him with a little quilted coat, embarrassingly new and blue. "It's never been to the washing-pool even once!" he gloated. For his only other coat was patched with all shades of faded blues left over from clothes of his uncles, his aunts, and his cousins.

"What made her give it to me?" he asked Aunt Ling.

Aunt Ling shrugged her shoulders: "Who

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knows about the hearts of these over-the-ocean women? Soft! She told us that in this month of February there is an over-the-ocean day when people give love-gifts to one another. She brought love-gifts to each of us. See? One for Pink Opal, one for Sister Pearl, one for little Moonbeam, one for old Grandmother Ling."

Buffalo Bill fingered the valentines curiously. On the backs of each the Plain Gray Lady had written a Bible verse in Chinese. But Buffalo Bill could not read. Pink Opal could not read. Little Moonbeam could not read. Nobody could.

"I got the best love-gift of all, didn't I?" he asked.

"Because you saved her life! She asked many questions about you. Finally she said that the heart of an orphan boy might get as five-jackets-cold as his body! She wants to warm your heart!"

Buffalo Bill pretended to think this was all perfect nonsense. A young gentleman who has lived ten winters and ten summers can warm his own heart, thank you. He blustered around as if he were greatly annoyed by this lady. But actually, he was too flattered for words! Actually, he was as vain as a peacock, as he pulled coat number

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two on top of coat number one every morning. But it was not until spring that he managed to let any of his true feelings show through. And even then I doubt whether Cynthia quite understood him.

For she had been visiting Aunt Ling, and coming home in the late afternoon had stopped to gather violets.

"Oh, look!" she called to Buffalo Bill, her face all pink and glowing. "Look! These grow in America, too. I'm taking back a basketful to decorate the school." She buried her face in the violets and drew long deep breaths.

Buffalo Bill was horrified. He pointed at the sun and cried: "Honorably stop! The sun! The sun!"

Cynthia sat back on her heels, astonished. Was there something deadly poisonous in Chinese violets?

The little boy still pointed at the sky: "Not safe! Not safe to pick flowers at sunset-time, for that is the hour when all the evil spirits out-of-doors are looking for some place to spend the night. They crawl inside the flower-petals, and if you take them into your house, alas! alas! what illness and misfortune you will have!"

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Cynthia preached a little sermon at him: "The God who made the violets made me, too. How can I be afraid, silly boy?"

The silly boy looked skeptical, and when she walked off with her arms full of violets he discovered that his five-jackets'-cold-heart was nearly breaking with the pity of it. She was so precious! And now she would die. What careless creatures women are!

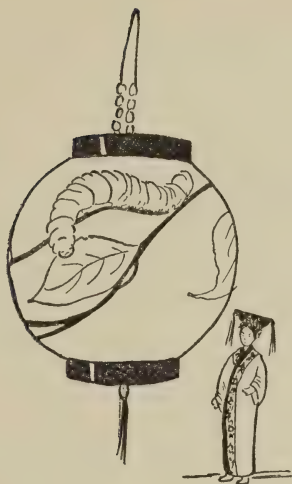
Cynthia would have liked to stay behind and convince the poor boy of her safety, but you will remember that the city gates were closed at sunset-time and she did not want to be locked out, of course.

Old Uncle Gate-Keeper warned her also when he saw the violets. "There will be trouble under your rooftree during all this moon!" he mourned, wagging his poor old head with flattering concern.

But about the thing which flattered Cynthia the most she wrote home to America: "And so, you safe young flower-pickers, having introduced you to Ling Po (I made up 'Buffalo Bill' myself), I must now tell you the sequel. For yesterday Grandmother Gate-Woman came to tell me that the smallest boy in China was inquiring

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for me at the gate. Was I dead yet? What? Not even down with a plague? Not the slightest sickness? Well, well—unbelievable And no other misfortunes of any kind? She said that he went into such details and seemed to be thinking up so many new possible ailments that she wondered if I would please trouble myself to come down and relieve his anxiety. You may be sure that I hurried to the gate, and there leaned Buffalo Bill. Very gruff and rough and mannish. ‘Here I am,’ I said, ‘altogether safe and sound in spite of flowers picked at sunset-time.’ He looked me up and down carefully. Then he said ‘Humph!’ whatever that may mean. After which he poked a present into my hand, and took to his heels and ran. It was a stone. Found in ‘our’ field, I think, for there was earth on it. Some people might not think a pebble much of a present, but the curious thing about my pebble is that it’s arrow-shaped: a bit wider at one end with a dent in the middle of the widest part, and a sharp point opposite. A heart, you see, a heart! I don’t believe Buffalo Bill can be nearly as five-jackets-cold as he used to be—not when he puts sermons in stones. Certainly I never had a nicer valentine.”



Here is Mr. Si. Also the Empress in the first silk dress ever made in the history of mankind. If you act out the story you can have a box-house with tip-up roofs for the palace, and a mulberry tree (which can be a twig stuck in a spool) under which a Blue Belle can stand, pretending to be the little homesick Empress. When you reach the part which Silver Dew Drop played, you can have another Blue Belle ride in a wheelbarrow (see Chapter II) as she is trundled to her factory. You can prove how long twelve hours are by moving the hands of a clock slowly around and around and around the dial until a whole day has passed by—how many minutes in twelve hours? Does fifteen cents seem enough to pay a Chinese child for loss of sunlight, fresh air, and play, and school?

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"Patience and a mulberry leaf will make a silk gown."

"With coarse food to eat, water to drink, and the bended arm as a pillow, happiness may still exist."

"Unjustly got wealth is like snow sprinkled with hot water."

XIII

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF MR. SI AND THE EMPRESS SI-LING-CHI

“TO NECKTIE BOB AND MY RIBBON-WEARING
SISTERS—GOOD MORNING! HAVE YOU
EATEN YOUR RICE?

“It is February as I write you, darlings, and in America you are about to celebrate Silk Week, and by the time you get my letter it will be April here in China where we shall then be celebrating Silk Week, too, with quaint ceremonies which I long to see. So I’m writing you a story-letter to-day, really three stories—one about Mr. Si, one about the Empress, and one about my precious Silver Dew Drop.

“It is only courteous, of course, to begin with the Empress. She was about fourteen years old when our story opens, and they say that she was feeling very lonely, for she had recently been married to the Emperor of China and was consequently far from her own old home. I suppose that she used to stand on the palace terrace and

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gaze off into the dim distance where the well-known rooftree was. But one day as she gazed she looked up into a tree and was famous ever afterward. Personally I have looked up into many a Chinese tree myself, and have never yet grown famous. But of course it had to be a special Tree With Mr. Si In It. She saw it first! She saw it 2,640 years before Christ was born.

"Little Mr. Si went fast asleep when she first saw him. He was very small, about three inches long and as big around as your thumb. He owned fully a hundred little feet with which he could crawl to his home at the top of a mulberry-tree, where all he ever did was to munch mulberry-leaves from morning till night. Eat. Eat. Eat. No time off for playing or even for sleeping, although once in every seven days he had to change his clothes. But this was no trouble at all—he simply shuffled off the old gray suit and went right on eating, for his new suit grew on his back right under the old one. Did you ever hear of anything so economical?

"But while the Empress Si-Ling-Chi was watching him he suddenly wanted to stop eating. And he did stop! He also wanted to go to sleep. And he did sleep! But first of all he had to make

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his bed. Sleeping in treetops is risky business, so he got a little rope and lashed his bed to a certain quiet twig. But you will be as astonished as the Empress to hear that he *found the rope in his mouth*. This is how he found it: He threw out a tiny thread from each side of his head, and since they were made of a jellylike fluid they hardened as soon as they struck the air. He fastened them to the twig; then by slowly tossing his head right and left he spun the two threads in one, making his rope longer and longer, and stronger and stronger. After which he proceeded to make his bed. The Empress could hardly believe her eyes when she saw that he found his bedclothes in his mouth, too! Again he slowly moved his head back and forth, while soft silky thread came from the corners of his mouth; and from these silken strands he wove a coverlet round and round his body. The threads glued themselves to other threads, and hardened on the outside like a piece of parchment. Then he went to sleep.

“The Empress had never envied any one quite so deeply: ‘I am a very great lady, but even my costliest jackets and trousers do not glisten like Mr. Si’s soft bedclothes.’

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“ You may be sure that she looked around to see if he had any relatives in the other mulberry-trees. She discovered hundreds of brothers, each nibbling tender green mulberry-leaves in a perfect frenzy. Never was there a family more comical: they would eat a few days, then sleep for two days; wake up, eat, sleep another two days. Four times they waked; and before their fifth sleep they made their beds exactly as their brother had done.

“ The Empress decided not to wait until their fifth awakening. She carried a few of the family into the palace, broke open the cradle-beds and gently began to wind off the shimmering bed-clothes. ‘ I will make myself a jacket from this! ’ she cried. It was the first silk dress ever made. In 2,640 B. C.!

“ The court ladies were simply green with envy until they, too, had coats and trousers made of silk. The court gentlemen began to beg for silk clothes too. Silk became so popular that the Emperor made an edict that only those in the palace might wear silk, for there is no use in being Emperor unless you can have something nobody else has! Naturally the Empress became very popular, she was called Si-Ling-Chi, the

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‘Goddess of the Silkworm,’ and every year in April there is a special feast in honor of her, a feast which has been held for *four thousand years*, you little brand new Americans!

“The story goes that for two thousand years the Chinese emperors kept the secret of how to make silk, but about the year 350 B. C. a certain prince of India married a certain Chinese princess. He carried her off to India with him, via the caravan route, and that bright little bride hid in her sandals and in her head-dress the eggs of the silkworm and the seeds of the mulberry-tree; so that before long they had silk in India, too. History becomes quite fascinating when you know that Alexander the Great tried his best to learn the secret of silk-making; and Julius Cæsar himself ordered silks from China for his Roman togas. And now you wear silk as a matter of course, with never a thought of Si or Si-Ling-Chi or even of Miss Silver Dew Drop. Especially Silver Dew Drop, bless her little Chinese heart!

“For the silk-story is still going on in China today, and Dew Drop has written many chapters of it with years of very hard work. First here in our City of Clouds and later in a Shanghai

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factory. At home she learned to reel the silk from Mr. Si by hand. She placed his cocoon in a basin of hot water to soften the gummy threads which had hardened into a parchment shell. Then she caught together the ends of four or five other cocoons and reeled them off, thus making a strand of 'raw' silk. Perhaps you will understand why good silk is so expensive when I tell you that it takes 3,000 silkworms to spin one pound of this raw silk to make a single dress!

"But even yet you do not realize the full cost of your neckties, sashes, and hair-ribbons, for half of that cost was paid for you by Silver Dew Drop in her Shanghai factory. My Plain Gray Lady tells me that the little girl was a perfect beauty when she left town, soft cheeks like yellow tea-rose petals with the pink just showing through, little slender hands, and a most contagious giggle. For three months she was a Blue Belle in our school, long before I came to China of course. Her parents had died, and she was very much unloved and unwanted in her grandparents' home. Her brother worked on a river-boat—Celestial Obedience is his name (the boy who stole Bob's star), and one day he brought home a fabulous story about the wealth a girl

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could earn in the silk factories of Shanghai. Just reeling silk, exactly as she did at home. The child ran away from home, hid in his boat, and went to Shanghai.

“Immediately her life became one continuously cruel Turkish bath! For twelve endless hours every day she stood bending over basins full of boiling water where the cocoons were soaking. All the pink tea-rose color faded from her little yellow cheeks as the perspiration dripped, dripped, dripped down her face. The air was only steam, of course, not at all the proper stuff to breath all day, since it had to be kept at 118° for the sake of the silkworms. For the sake of worms! For the sake of new sashes and neckties and ribbons!

“But nothing whatever done for the sake of little Silver Dew Drop in her wee bound feet! Hot all day, freezing all night. She says thousands of little girls just like herself are trundled through the Shanghai streets at daybreak on their way to the silk-mills. Their golden lilies are too small for them to walk! ‘I got sick,’ she said to me, ‘*here!*’ and she thumped her little chest. ‘I got sick. I coughed and coughed and coughed. By that time I was in the room with

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the spindles. I stood in a little alley of flying spindles. I had to fly too—fly here and fly there to watch for broken threads. Well, I had to be all eyes. But by and by I got too tired to be eyes. I got stupid. Clumsy. They didn't want me any more.'

" 'But what did you do for a living then?' I asked.

" 'Oh, I stood on a corner and begged. Sometimes I would get a penny a day. Sometimes four or five. In the factory I earned fifteen cents a day, so then I felt poor. I watched the river-boats for Celestial Obedience. Finally he came. He smuggled me back. But nobody wanted me under my family roof-tree. I was a little "lose-money-person." But the Honorable Teacher wanted me! She gets milk for me to drink. She makes me sleep in the open air. She fitted up the little balcony on Grandmother Gate-Woman's lodge especially for me to sleep on all day long. I'm going to get well! I'm going to be a person like Grandmother Gate-Woman, an *inviter!*'

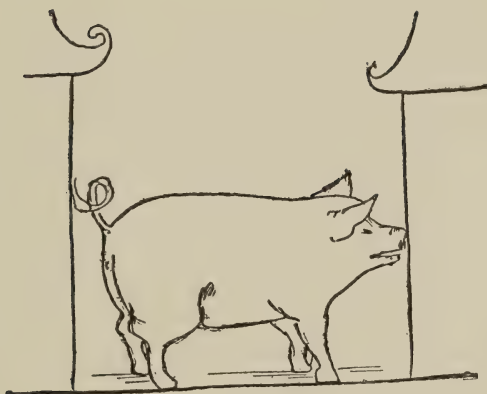
"The other day in our school prayer-meeting Silver Dew Drop stood up and said: 'I've been like a silkworm all my life, bound fast in a cocoon of sin which I've spun round and round myself.

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Then I went to sleep. I slept five times, I guess! And nobody ever tried to make anything lovely out of me, they just let me harden. But all of a sudden I know there's something with wings in me, and I'm starting to break through the cocoon. I'm going to be God's little moth. I'm the happiest girl in China!'

"My dear Bob, and you my little silk-wearing sisters, I can't help wondering if you won't save your dimes and nickels and quarters for this little Blue Belle of ours. One dollar will keep her in school one month. There's an old Chinese proverb which says 'Patience and a mulberry-leaf will make a silk dress,' but I have a better proverb than that even if it *is* only two minutes old: 'Patience and a dollar will make a Christian scholar.' How about it?

"Your devoted sister, CYN."



To illustrate the lane that was only pig-wide you will, of course, want two Chinese box-houses (see Chapter XI) with a pink pig exactly broad enough to reach from wall to wall, with Cynthia standing on one side and the polite Chinese gentleman on the other. Pink cardboard, cut double, will make an excellent pig; paste the two sides of the backs and heads together; then spread the legs apart so that he can stand. Ordinary Chinese pigs are quite brown and filthy from wallowing in the mud and the sewers all day long; so the pinkness of the Wangs' "good-to-love" pig was a wonderful advertisement to the whole street that Sunday was quite different from Saturday and Monday.

EAT- DRIVERS:

“When one is eating one’s own, one eats to repletion; when one is eating another’s, one eats until the tears run.”

“Better slight a guest than starve him.”

“Better be civil to the kitchen god than to the god of the inner sanctum.”

XIV

THE PIG THAT WAS A VACUUM CLEANER

AT first Cynthia called him the Pig That Was A Carpet Sweeper; but the more she thought about it, the more she knew that this would be most incorrect, since there was really not a sign of a carpet in the entire Wang house. Neither did it seem altogether correct to call him a Vacuum Cleaner, for surely the word vacuum means "nothing there": and a great deal WAS there! A *very* great deal, at first. But after the pig had had time to run his grunter over the floor not a core nor a peel nor a paring was left: he had certainly left a vacuum.

"He ought to be patented!" she confided to the Plain Gray Lady. "Imagine a cleaner that needs no electric attachment to make him run! No difficult pushing or shoving by hand! No saying, 'Oh, dear, I overlooked a crumb under the table!' Of his own accord the pig spies all the crumbs and grease-spots, and cheerfully sucks them in. His works never clog. His parts never

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need oiling. Just turn him loose, and he does the rest! And his trade-mark ought to be, 'Feeds while it cleans.' *Now* I know why the Chinese character for home is a roof with a pig under it!"

Cynthia met him first on her way to eat "late rice" with the Wangs. She met him while she was stepping gingerly through the mud of New Green Pea Lane. If the streets of the town were very narrow, the lanes were narrower still. Indeed, this lane was exactly pig-wide! For his nice little snout nuzzled against the house wall on one side and his ridiculous curly-queue tail tickled the house wall on the other wall. He had made himself into a gate which nobody could pass.

"Are you a Chinese Balaam's ass, dear Pig?" asked Cynthia addressing him politely, wondering if this could be a sign for her to turn around and go home, for you will remember the Bible story of how Balaam's ass did everything possible to block Balaam from making a certain wrong journey.

Cynthia's pig grunted.

Cynthia had had so many troubles poll-parrotting human Chinese that pig Chinese was doubly impossible to translate. "Say it again!" she

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begged, clapping her hands, not because she expected an answer of course, but in the hope that the pig might move around to see who dared to disturb this new lane-measuring business of his; the minute he moved, she expected to dash quickly past him.

But there never was a pig less curious. He felt no least desire to see the newcomer. Cynthia in her best dress dared not go any nearer; she stood poised on a big muddy cobblestone wondering what in the world to do. And then, from the other direction, came a knight to the rescue; a very grand knight in a long purple satin coat covered with gold dragons. He looked at the pig. Then he looked at the lady. He bowed: "Forgive me, Honorable Sister, but this is the pig of the Wangs. He is therefore a Christian pig. The new doctrine especially teaches golden deeds. He will surely get out of the way if you only ask him."

"I have asked him," Cynthia bowed, "and he will not budge."

"Forgive me!" sighed the Purple Knight. "Forgive me. It is very unfitting that he should block the Honorable Sister's way." He closed his fan and flicked the pig on the back smartly:

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“Speedily, speedily! For the Honorable Sister open a very wide way.”

Heathen or Christian, no Chinese pig could resist such a hint. He moved. Cynthia dashed to the cobblestone where the Purple Knight had stood, and the Purple Knight hurried to the cobblestone where Cynthia had stood. So far, so good! They bowed very solemnly to each other over the pig's back, and Cynthia had supposed this would be the end of the story. But there is never an end to any story in a Chinese walled city.

For you will remember that she was on her way to eat supper with the Wangs. Mr. Wang had recently become a “worshiping-God-man” and had finally so influenced his old mother that Grandma Wang wanted to have a talk with the new Shepherdess. She had already had many talks with the Plain Gray Lady, but she felt that two missionaries would be none too many to explain all the puzzling questions she had in mind. Cynthia was flattered to be asked, but a little nervous also, for so many things were hard to explain in new Chinese, and then of course there was the chop-stick side of dining out. Unless you have tried it you can have no idea what a

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risky business it is to have to carry every morsel of food all the way from the table to your lips between two sticks as slippery as blunt knitting-needles!

There was also a tremendous amount of bowing to be done before it was proper to be seated at the high square table. Tea was served in little cups which had no handles. Cynthia knew enough to pick up her cup with both hands and to sip the tea noisily enough to prove how much she enjoyed it. In the center of the table was a dish with a dozen little separate partitions, filled with walnuts, salted peanuts, candy, dried pumpkin-seeds, melon-seeds, and other curious things impossible to name. Grandmother Wang used her fingers to serve Cynthia, giving her something from each of the little compartments. Presently the table was wiped off and a number of bowls were brought in full of things to eat which Cynthia was obliged to sample politely. There was pork fried in oil, and cabbage dumpling flavored with garlic, and of course there was rice, there also were meat balls swimming in gravy, and vegetables. The Wangs were evidently anxious to make a very good impression on this new Shepherdess! But the thing that made the real

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impression was Grandmother Wang's habit of serving everything to those at the table with her own chop-sticks. One minute she would be dipping them into her own bowl and carrying something to her lips, the next minute—between bites—she would be serving Cynthia. It was the height of politeness, from hostess to guest! Cynthia wondered if this, too, was a four-thousand-year-old custom in China.

It was in the midst of the meal that Cynthia saw Grandma Wang sweep some vegetables on the floor. Presently the oldest Aunt Wang threw some tough seeds on the floor. A very little Wang dropped half a cabbage dumpling by mistake. Cynthia tried not to notice what a number of things were going floorward, and then she noticed the pig. Her pig!

"He can't be Balaam's ass," she smiled. "He's more like Mary's little lamb; my! won't the Wangs laugh and play when they find him here at their dinner-party!"

But not a Wang seemed astonished. Not even when the pig ran his snuffling little grunter all over the floor and sucked in the cores, the peelings, the droppings, the crumbs. It dawned on Cynthia at last that he did this vacuum-cleaning

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after every meal. "He ought to be patented!" she smiled.

And then came the questions. Dozens of them. For Grandmother Wang was frankly worried about being a Christian. She said that she had burned her idols. "I burned them but I said, 'May you be blessed and return to heaven in peace.' Was that all right?"

Cynthia was afraid not.

The oldest Aunt Wang added: "But she didn't burn the kitchen god. Surely it's best to keep it pasted over the kitchen-stove, isn't it?"

Cynthia was afraid not! "Take me out and let me see the kitchen," she asked. They led her there, and she looked up at the little paper idol wondering why he seemed so necessary.

"Haven't you really ever heard the story about him?" asked Grandmother Wang, surprised. "He was once a man named Chang. He grew tired of his wife although she was a very good woman, so he put her out of the house and married somebody who turned out to be just as bad as his other wife had been good. In fact she was so unpleasant that he had to leave home! Meanwhile his poor first wife, when cast outdoors, had had to wander sadly all over the countryside,

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until suddenly she saw some shining lumps on the ground. She picked as many as she could carry and soon made her home with a lonely old woman; the shining lumps were pure gold! Well, one day along came a very miserable beggar. She knew at once that it was her husband, but he did not recognize her until she set before him a bowl of delicious noodle soup made as only she could make it, for she knew it was his favorite soup. Just then a large brass hair-pin fell from her hair, and he saw that it was one which he had given his wife. He was so overcome with shame to think of her serving him so kindly when he had treated her so badly that he fainted and fell into the fire. He went up in smoke, and ever since then he's been worshiped as the kitchen god. Once a year he's burned, with plenty of spirit money, so that he will give a good report of us in the upper air. Then we paste up a new god over the stove. It seems to me that we would hardly dare to eat if he wasn't out here to guard the rice-bowls. But the other Shepherdess says this is wrong, that a Christian cannot serve two gods. What is your honorable opinion?"

I do not need to tell you Cynthia's answer!

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The old lady wagged her head regretfully: "Well, I gave up the other gods quite easily, so now I must give up this one, too. Golden Virtue, take him down!"

Golden Virtue took him down. She trembled like a leaf.

"Tear him up!" ordered Grandmother Wang.

"Oh, I don't dare!" wailed Golden Virtue. She trembled like two leaves!

"Tear him up!" ordered the old lady earnestly.

Golden Virtue tore him up. But she trembled like a whole aspen-tree! She trembled so much that two of the pieces of paper fluttered to the ground, and would you believe it? before she could pick them up the Pig Who Was A Vacuum Cleaner sucked them into his mouth. Cynthia thinks he liked the taste of the paste.

"Now he will have to be a heathen pig!" said little Fragrant Love, her hands clasped excitedly over her stomach.

"Will he?" asked Grandmother Wang anxiously.

"No!" said Cynthia, settling that hard theological question at once. "For the God who made you and me made the pig also."

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"I am glad of that," said Grandmother Wang. But Fragrant Love and Golden Virtue decided to keep an eye on the pig. It was their firm conviction that in the course of time he would surely die. A pig who had eaten a kitchen god! Mercy on us!

Before Cynthia went home she made a little calendar of Christian Sabbaths to be pasted on the wall, so that Sunday could come regularly to New Green Pea Lane. And every time Fragrant Love would check off a Sunday date she would look at the pig.

"You see, he's a Christian pig," she explained to her little heathen playmates.

"Is he? Why?" they asked.

"Well, he didn't die from eating an idol. And besides, haven't you ever noticed how we clean him up when Sundays come around? We thought perhaps we ought to. Golden Virtue does it one week, and I do it the next."

It was quite an advertisement to have a Sunday pig on New Green Pea Lane! Cynthia said maybe that is why the Chinese written character for home is a roof with a pig under.



It is possible to make a really gorgeous dragon from six sheets of red tissue paper, three sheets for each side of the body. Paste the paper end to end, neatly overlapping about a quarter of an inch. Experiment with a newspaper pattern before attempting to cut out the dragons from two thicknesses of the tissue paper. Paste these two dragons together around the margins only, so that the inside can fill with air. A hoop of pasteboard glued in the mouth will let the air in more easily. Paste white eyeballs and teeth in place, and paint black fins and fangs and scales in proper places; an orange tissue paper tongue emerging from the jaws will be effective.

THE FINEST PROVERBS:

"In shallow water, dragons become the joke of shrimps."

"It's no use calling the tiger to chase away the dog."

"One hill cannot shelter two tigers."

XV

A NEW ST. GEORGE BUT A VERY OLD DRAGON

YOU cannot blame Cynthia for having some trouble in remembering the Chinese names of her Blue Belles apart when Duoi-di, Kiang-di, Liang-di, Hi-di, and Pau-di each meant "Bring Brother," showing how disappointed their separate parents had been when each particular new baby had been born a girl! Cynthia was always saying one name when she meant another, which the Blue Belles themselves considered quite a joke, although their Shepherdess seemed so distressed each time it happened. It was because of this difficulty that she always thought of Hi-di as "Goody-Two-Shoes" and of the little Duoi-di as "George."

No name could have fitted Duoi-di better, because if there was anything to be done in school this particular Bring Brother wanted to do it! Pencils to be sharpened? Errands to be run? Rooms to be dusted? Buttons to be sewed on? It was the easiest thing in the world to "leave it

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to George," to "let George do it." And then, too, George always told the truth. Instantly! Flatly! Outrightly! No matter what the peril to herself!

"Sometimes, George," Cynthia said, "you make me wonder whether there isn't a cherry-tree growing in your courtyard with a hatchet at the foot of it."

George, of course, looked greatly puzzled. What could the dear Shepherdess mean? Or was she trying to say one thing and saying another? "A cherry-tree? A hatchet?" George repeated in a worried sort of fashion. "No, Shepherdess! But we have a little dwarf pine and a hammer. Would those do?"

You can see for yourself that George was a darling, and the last thing Cynthia expected to do was to offer the dear child to a dangerous dragon. And yet she did. She did!

It began one day in the sewing class when George had been in school only five months and was still a very green Blue Belle. Cynthia noticed that for once the busy George who liked to do everything was actually doing nothing. Just sitting! With folded hands!

"Are you sick today?" Cynthia whispered tenderly.

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George bobbed her polite little bow: "Excuse me, Shepherdess, I am well."

"But you aren't sewing?"

George looked frightened: "But do I dare, *to-day?* For today the dragon lifts his head; do I dare to touch a needle?"

Cynthia wondered if she had heard correctly: "Dare not use a needle, *Duoi-di?*"

The eyes of George looked deep with fears, the voice of George fell to a ghostly whisper: "To-day the dragon lifts his head, and if I used a needle I might stick it into his eyes. Oh, Shepherdess, surely none of us should sew today!"

Instantly the entire class dropped needles and sewing in a sudden panic! For they were all first-year students, and still very green. But Cynthia was green, too. She took her greenness to the Plain Gray Lady: "What am I going to do? My class has gone on strike! A regular mutiny, not one of them will sew, and it's all on account of a dragon. *Have* we a dragon in our midst?"

"We have!" sighed the Plain Gray Lady. "He lives in great palaces under the earth, when he rolls over in bed there's an earthquake, when it rains it's the tears of the dragon. Utter

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belief in him has kept the conservative Chinese from mining their coal and their iron. What? Tickle the dragon's ribs unceremoniously? They would all be gobbled up exactly as the dragon gobbles up the sun every evening of his life! For I suppose you've seen the old-fashioned Chinese flag with its picture of the dragon swallowing the sun, haven't you? Well, in such behind-the-times cities as this the people still cling to their old superstitions, and today is the day when the Chinese say the dragon lifts his head? Which means in plain English that spring has come. There'll be a dragon parade in the streets to-night; you'll be amazed at the gorgeous sight. Meanwhile suppose I go in and tell a story to those little strikers of yours, a well-known Chinese version of our own old English myth about Saint George and the dragon. Come along and listen."

The Blue Belles were looking very rebellious and decidedly startled. Were the Shepherdesses going to force them to sew? But when they found that it was to be a story they sat down meekly and listened, for who does not love a fairy tale?

"Once upon a time," the Plain Gray Lady

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began, "there was a terrible dragon. He snorted red fire from his nostrils and whipped up the whole landscape with the lashing of his giant tail."

The Blue Belles shivered with delight. Ah, this was the way to tell legends! So that cold chills ran up and down backbones. . .

"And the only thing that that dragon would eat was a little girl. One at a time he gobbled them: little girls under thirteen, juicy and tender! But of course it kept the people busy feeding him with the little daughters of criminals, slaves, and bondservants until the supply of these ran out. There wasn't one left. Not one. What to do then?"

More shivering by the Blue Belles. Cynthia could fairly read in their eyes the thoughts in their little minds: "O-oh, I'm under thirteen years old myself! O-oh!"

"Now there was in that country a great *tai-tai*, the most important official to be found. A very pompous gentleman he was, with palaces and serving men and ten thousand soldiers, at the very least. Also he had six daughters, and the sixth little daughter said to herself: 'I'm just Number Six. They've never even troubled to

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give me a name. I'm so unwanted and so unimportant a child that perhaps it's for me to do something about this dragon!' You see, she was the kind of girl who liked to do things." (George looked Cynthia in the eye!) "So that brave little heroine asked for a dog, she asked for a sword, she asked for plenty of boiled rice. Then with the sword in her right hand and the bowl in her left, she led the dog toward the dragon's cavern. Just one little girl, mind you, in little blue-cotton trousers and a little blue-cotton jacket, her pigtail dangling down her back."

"Just like me," giggled Goody Two Shoes, nervously.

"And me," added George.

"Exactly," agreed the Plain Gray Lady. "Well, when little Miss Number Six got to the cavern she mixed the great mound of rice with plenty of honey, and out crawled the dragon from his cave licking his horrible pink tongue all over his lips getting ready to enjoy the feast, while his horrible tail lashed down trees and bushes and even a pagoda. But while he was swallowing the rice, up dashed the dog and set his sharp teeth into the dragon's neck; and while

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the dog was chewing this neck, up dashed little Miss Number Six with her sharp sword and hacked at the dragon's tail from behind until he *died!* Then the people in that country stood around and marveled. 'Just a dragon,' they cried, 'just tails and scales! We ought to have gotten rid of him ourselves long ago. Three cheers for the brave little maiden who did this good deed!' And I do not need to tell you, my dears, that her story has been told in China from that day to this."

The Blue Belles nodded. They began to put two and two together: Were all dragons just tails and scales? Killable?

The Plain Gray Lady said they were even less than that! "They are just *thoughts*, that's all dragons have ever been! There's the thought-dragon called Superstition, for instance. He makes you think the air is full of evil spirits when there isn't such a thing in all God's world. He makes you afraid to use your needles on a day that's exactly like any other day God gives you, all because a real dragon underneath the world is supposed to be lifting his head. Haven't I told you who made the sky and the earth and the sea and the rocks underneath us? The great

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Lord God made every inch of the earth, every drop of the sea, every speck of the air. He made it for you to play with! There is nothing to fear anywhere. And the reason I have opened the doors of my school is because I want every one of you to go out some day to slay that old Superstition-dragon."

The hour was over. The Blue Bells scampered away. But George did not scamper. Very thoughtfully she hunted up Amazing Grace to ask permission to go home to visit her family. Since George could not tell a lie she simply said impressively that it was the most important, the most solemn, and the most secret occasion of her whole life; she really must be home for it! Since George lived within the city walls Amazing Grace gave her consent; and nobody gave a single thought to George, because the dragon procession was such a thrilling sight to see.

Twenty men in gray were that dragon's forty legs, so inconspicuous themselves that the gorgeous gold-and-scarlet beast seemed to be sprawling slowly through the air with its scaly, horned, and corrugated sides. It wriggled and squirmed and twisted and writhed in the most ferocious fashion as the wind rushed through its empty

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paper body; and every few yards it turned its awful fiery head, opened wide its terrible jaws, and belched forth a hideous yelp, made of course by the twenty men in gray below it. Swarms of people thronged the streets, shouting and shooting off firecrackers, chanting all sorts of prayers and petitions, and acting truly frenzied in certain communities; at other times the procession was equally gorgeous to see but not quite so wild.

"This is China! Heathen China!" sighed Cynthia, and then—while she was looking—she saw that far down the street the dragon had suddenly become one burning blazing mass. One moment, all flames; the next moment, a mere black paper shell; after which, as the wind blew on that shell—nothingness! Just twenty men in gray with twenty poles upholding—nothingness.

"What's happened?" "Who did this?" "It's the vengeance of the dragon!" "Calamity!" "Alas! Alas!" "Who did this?" rippled from mouth to mouth and from street to street. There were moans and groans. There were jeers and sneers. There was much confusion. And all this time on top of a certain gatepost perched a certain girl in blue, with her heart beating very fast and her hands—well! look at

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her hands, will you? Blistered as if by fire. Scorched—blackened—aching.

“How am I ever going to get down off this high perch with my hands this way?” she cried, with tears of pain in her eyes.

But a hundred arms seemed to reach up toward her: “She did it! She did it! She’s had a torch of faggots burning in her hands all evening, hasn’t she?”

“That’s so!”

“I saw her stretch out her torch to touch the dragon’s tail!”

“Bring her down! Whip her! Flog her! Crazy child!”

And the little girl who had wondered how she was ever going to get down, found a hundred arms reaching up to get her. They dragged her down crossly, rudely, roughly; life would have gone hard with her that night if she had not given a series of curious clucks: “Ka-ch’k! Ka-ch’k! —Come, Fierce Dog!”

Come he did! With such yapping and yelping and growling and snapping and biting that people were hopping ever-which-way, nursing their shins and their legs wherever his dreadful teeth or his dreadful claws had dug. Quietly the girl

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ran off through the crowd; quietly she ran into empty lanes; quietly she found the queer crooked alleys which finally brought her to Grandmother Gate-Woman's gate. She knocked and knocked.

Then up to Cynthia's door she ran. She opened it, fell inside, and lay flat on the floor.

"*George!*" cried Cynthia, startled.

She picked up the child. Such a limp Blue Belle, with such burned hands! She called the Plain Gray Lady. They dressed the burns with soothing ointment, they bandaged them. George opened her eyes. "No good, stupid me!" she sighed drearily. "Got frightened. Called Fierce Dog too soon. Never said Jesus could save. Never said Dragon couldn't. Sorry. Sorry. No good!" And she fainted again.

Cynthia looked at the Plain Gray Lady. "Just what does all this mean, anyhow?" she asked.

"I think it means a new Saint George but a very old dragon," said the Plain Gray Lady softly, her eyes shining as she kissed the little bandaged hands with real reverence. "And now you see, Cynthia, what stuff Chinese girls are made of!"

The next morning at prayers the Plain Gray Lady read a wonderful verse written by Saint

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Paul: "*I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.*" But only Cynthia, Amazing Grace, and George understood why she read it. And George felt very humble: "Oh, I bungled things," she sighed for the forty 'leventh time, "I didn't once mention the Saviour."

But possibly you realize that her silence was a good thing, for if it had become known in town that a little Christian scholar had dared to spoil a heathen festival, I think that the Heavenly Education-Instilling School would have been far from popular.



By the time you finish this book you will have discovered that a box can make anything from a house to a wheelbarrow. This time it will make a fine table if you choose a bright red squarish box, with the bottom turned up for the table top and the red box-lid laid over this bottom. You can readily see that it will be necessary to cut away practically all of each side, leaving only the corners to form the legs.

Ancestral tablets can easily be made by pushing small pieces of red cardboard into slits cut in the tops of pill-boxes. The Chinese are overwhelmed by the fear that *no one is more alive than the dead*; so every morning the son of the house must kneel, bump his forehead politely on the floor, and worship the tablets in which the spirits of the dead are supposed to reside, thus keeping the restless ghosts of the departed in a good humor all day; otherwise what harm they might do! The idol in Chapter XI will be useful for this story.

CHINESE
PROVERBS:

"Eighteen goddess-like daughters do not equal one son with a limp."

"A stupid son is better than a crafty daughter."

"The pestle produces white rice, and the rod good children."

"Talk does not cook rice."

XVI

PANTALOONS OUT OF THE SKY

THERE is a wolf in this April Fool story, and a grandmother, and two small red caps: almost as if two Little Red Riding Hoods might appear, but instead of being girls they will be boys, and the wolf himself is going to be a far more dreadful creature than either child had imagined. For on a certain day in April their grandmother took them to the temple. It had been very slow work for her to get there on account of her lily feet and her old rheumatic back. But it was the birthday of the special Children's God, and she felt that it was absolutely necessary for her to go, for Heavenly Repose and Glorious Fighter were all the men-folks she had left in the world to worship her ancestral tablet when she herself should leave this life and go to be "a guest on high." So although she was poor and feeble and old, she hobbled to the temple, holding a small boy by each hand.

But when they were once inside the temple they simply bellowed with fear at the first sight of the

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idol. He was so big! His head towered half-away up to the ceiling! His terrible eyes stared in such a hideous black-and-white fashion! He held a giant bow and arrow in his hands ready to strike the enormous wolf which was up in the ceiling ready to spring. You would have cried, yourself, at the sight of those red yawning jaws, those sharp white teeth.

“Oh! Oh! Oh!” screamed Glorious Fighter and Heavenly Repose, panic-stricken. Their grandmother held them with an extra tight grip: “Now listen to me,” she said, “this is a very good idol. He cares for little children, so you must burn your incense and make your little offering to thank him for keeping the wolf away from you all this last year; for how often have I told you that if one of you dies it is absolutely necessary for me to give your body to the dogs at once, because the dog is the nearest relative of the wolf; if I don’t, the wolf himself will come and take another child. And *then* who will worship my ancestral tablet when I die? So kneel down quickly and get it over with.”

Down they knelt on their trembling knees; they bumped their red caps on the ground, as they bowed far over several times; they lighted the

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joss-sticks, they said their "thank you" in the thinnest little voices you ever head. Then they rushed pell-mell from the temple, leaving their grandmother to hobble out all alone, mumbling something very curious indeed: "I've got one little girl and one little boy! One little girl and one little boy!" she kept telling the idol; certainly a peculiar thing to say when out in the open air were waiting two little red-capped boys.

But perhaps you do not quite realize about the gods of China, what a jealous lot they are! They might envy a poor old grandmother with two grandsons—they might think it a great joke to let the evil spirits send illness to those sons—but where, oh where, in all of China was there an idol to bother his head about a *granddaughter*? Just a trifling nuisance, she, not worth noticing, for could *she* ever worship ancestral tablets? Of course not! So Granny had the bright idea of mumbling, "One little girl, one little boy." For even in case one boy should be taken away, there would still be one left to care for her tablet. She chuckled with amusement; this was a delightful joke on the gods. She decided to put an earring in the ear of Glorious Fighter at once and call him "Silly Girl" from that day onward. Which

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thing she did to the great disgust of Silly Girl. He could not see why he had not been the brother to keep on being a boy.

And then it seemed as if a little Chinese gust of wind decided to have a hand in their family affairs. At first it was just a pleasant little zephyr out in the mission yard watching the Blue Belles doing their Monday's washing. How they did rub! What suds they did make! And when the little coats and trousers were hung on the line to dry what fun it was to blow the sleeves and legs around in the most violent gymnastics imaginable! But there was one little pair of purple pantaloons not properly pinned to the clothes-line; in fact, not pinned at all; and when the zephyr changed to a full-fledged breeze it lifted those small purple pantaloons and sent them swimming through the air straight up on the school roof. There they flapped helplessly, while the breeze held its sides and laughed and laughed. "Climb that roof!" it ordered. "But I can't!" gasped the pantaloons breathlessly. "Nonsense!" replied the breeze, and turned itself into a regular gale as it wafted them up and up in the air, sky-rocketing them off into space like dizzy runaways.

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Far down below stood Heavenly Repose and Silly Girl shouting, "Oh, see that funny purple kite!" And then the Chinese gale of wind grew tired of its fun, or perhaps it heard a sailor on the river whistling to Favoring Wind Ear for a favorable breeze; in any case, it left those pantaloons in midair, and departed.

Down they fluttered to the courtyard where four arms reached up to grab: "*Mine! Mine first!*" shouted Heavenly Repose. "*Mine! Mine!*" cried Silly Girl, and dashed indoors with his prize to show Granny.

The old lady was worrying again: Suppose an earring and a new name were not enough to deceive the gods? Suppose they knew that Silly Girl was a boy, doing boy-things all day long? Just when she was worrying hardest in came Silly Girl with the purple pantaloons. Granny had an inspiration. "Put them on!" she ordered. Silly Girl put them on. They were rather big for him, but by fastening the waistline in tucks up under his arms they did well enough. Granny chuckled: "I know! I know! I know how to make the gods believe you're a girl. I'll send you to that girl's school around the corner. *Then* they'll believe it!"

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Silly Girl nearly died of the mortification of it. "Make brother the girl and send him, Venerably Aged," he begged. But Granny knew enough not to spoil such a bright idea half-way through it! She took a long string of cash and went down to the Street of the Seventy Honest Merchants. Poor as she was she bought some bangs with a lovely long pigtail hanging down behind, and she bought a bead-dangling head-band to go with it. "For my granddaughter," she announced loudly, to deceive any gods who might be listening.

Poor Silly Girl! He stamped his feet and vowed he would not wear those foolish bangs or that girlish pigtail. He wriggled and squirmed and dodged, but Granny finally fastened them in place, lecturing him meanwhile on the dread in her heart: "Suppose one of you died, and then the other died, who would take care of me? Gods never trouble with girls, so you will be safer than Heavenly Repose will ever be. So do be a sensible grandson. Anyhow, it needn't be for long. Just until we get the gods used to the idea that you are a girl. That isn't much to do for your grandmother, is it?"

Silly Girl thought that it was, but he let her lead him to the gate of the Heavenly Education-

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Instilling School. Grandmother Gate-Woman poked her head out: "Come on in!" she cried cordially. If you have ever been to the dentists you know how the heels of Silly Girl's sandals dragged on the floor. It was Cynthia who received them. "Alas!" she cried, when grandmother had made her request, "there isn't an inch of room in the entire school where another bed can be put. We've been taking new girls every week until now we are much too overcrowded. It breaks my heart to say 'No!'"

Silly Girl began to look much less glum. His heart gave a delighted flop, and he promptly stood up ready to depart at once. But grandmother had no intention of departing—no indeed. She began to argue: "What! No room for such a tiny little girl as mine, just a mere splinter of a child? And if there isn't a vacant bed, never mind; I live just around the corner in the Lane of Wind-and-Rain, so the child can easily live under my roof-tree; in fact I prefer it."

"In that case," smiled Cynthia, "I am sure we can arrange it nicely." Whereupon the face of the new pupil got glummer than ever. These women! He dug his feet in the floor with rage.

Said Cynthia: "What a sensible and progres-

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sive old lady you are! For I notice that the feet of your lovely little granddaughter are unbound. The Middle Flowery Country needs girls who can walk and read and be as free as boys, doesn't it?"

What a terrible question! For if ever an old lady believed in golden lilies for girls it was this particular old lady. She wondered suddenly if she ought not to bind the feet of Silly Girl if she wanted to deceive the gods entirely. But it was too late just now, of course. "Ten thousand thanks for your worshipful care of my little no-good-girl," she said, rising and bowing, pleased at the success of her plan.

Cynthia rose and bowed also: "If you could spare Silly Girl to eat evening rice with us then she could get acquainted with the other girls to-day and she would not feel so strange in school tomorrow."

"Willingly! Willingly!" beamed the old lady, enchanted at the thought that the gods could at once see her granddaughter being a granddaughter. But Silly Girl, of course, did not agree. He lifted up his voice and wailed loudly when the well-known figure went hobbling away. Cynthia took him on her lap tenderly: "There!

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There! little girl, cheer up," she whispered gaily, "you'll love us all tomorrow."

Silly Girl was simply furious to be cuddled! At his age! By a stranger! He leaped from her lap like a frog and pounded her knees angrily: "You let me alone!"

Cynthia was surprised, but exceedingly tactful: "What a strong girl you are, Silly Girl! And do you mind my telling you that you are so much better than your name that you ought to have a new one! Or do you like it?"

"I certainly don't!" grouched Silly Girl crossly.

"Well, it's easy to change it. Fully half of our girls have school names which they have chosen for themselves. You might choose a new one, too."

"I choose Glorious Fighter," he said promptly and vigorously.

"Oh, but that's a boy's name," Cynthia objected, "and it really doesn't sound any better to me than Silly Girl. Why don't you choose something pretty like Precious Pearl or Lily Flower or Jade-like Blossom——"

Silly Girl was bubbling with rage at such suggestions, when the room began to fill up with girls

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who gathered in line to wait for evening rice. Cynthia introduced Silly Girl to everybody, adding, "We must do all we can to make this little newcomer feel at home."

The Blue Belles nodded, and immediately swarmed around the embarrassed new pupil only to have their flattering offers of friendship sadly rebuffed by the irritated Silly Girl. Who wanted a lot of foolish girls standing around, simpering? He kicked everybody who came near! And when he kicked, one of the startled Blue Belles suddenly cried: "My Sunday-go-to-meeting pantaloons! She's got on my best purple pantaloons! The ones I couldn't find!" She made a grab for them.

Now it is true that Silly Girl did not in the least want the horrid trousers, but it would never do to hand them over meekly to any idiotic girl named Fragrant Gentility. Not he! A mere *girl!* He rushed at the mere girl, and the mere girl rushed at him: Cynthia had never seen such a whirligig as they made in the center of the schoolroom floor—a hundred fists seemed to thump a hundred backs as they pummeled and rolled and kicked each other. The scandalized Blue Belles stood frozen on the side-lines; Cyn-

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this alone had courage to rush over and separate the fighters.

“For shame, Fragrant Gentility, for shame! To fight a poor little new girl, so much smaller than yourself! Stop it, this moment!”

Fragrant Gentility hung her head. But Silly Girl held his upright, hurt to the core; *poor little new girl*, he? Bah!

“Fragrant Gentility, you must come over and apologize to Silly Girl at once, dear.”

Fragrant Gentility obeyed. Girls are born to obey in China. She stepped toward Silly Girl: “I am sorr——” she started, and then her eyes lighted on those dear pantaloons, undoubtedly her own because of that special little patch on the knee—how dared anybody wear her blessed Sunday-go-to-meeting pantaloons? She lunged straight at the lordly Silly Girl, who had been waiting with a smirk to receive her apology. He was astonished at her fierceness, he turned to escape, and Fragrant Gentility grabbed the new girl’s pigtail as it swung in a circle during the flight. But zip! to her perfect horror the new girl’s entire scalp came loose in her hands—pig-tail, bangs, and head-band! Fragrant Gentility nearly fainted with the horror of it.

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Cynthia nearly fainted also. For one awful moment she held her hands over her eyes and groaned aloud: "Oh, Silly Girl! Oh, Silly Girl!"

And then, giggles, giggles, giggles! Lovely little Chinese Blue Belle giggles! Her eyes flew open and rested on Silly Girl. Under the lost scalp she seemed to have another complete scalp! What an amazing child! It took a full moment for the truth to dawn on her—this girl was a boy. And the purple pantaloons undoubtedly belonged to Fragrant Gentility.

She called for the Plain Gray Lady to settle such a delicate question of etiquette: how did one treat a boy masquerading in a girl's school? Evidently one treated him by leading him straight home to his grandmother.

"It is a matter of deep regret to me that your granddaughter is a boy and therefore cannot be received into my school," she said, bowing politely.

The old woman sighed. Here she was, back again where she started. She put her finger on her lip and whispered: "Sh! Sh! Please don't say it so loudly on the night air, where there may be more evil spirits than usual hanging around waiting for daylight. They will like nothing

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better than to tell all this to the gods about me tomorrow. Ai ya! Ai ya! Was there ever such an unlucky old woman as I? Only two men-folks left to worship my tablet, and suppose something happened to both of them, where would I be? Ai ya! Ai ya!"

"Oh!" sighed the Plain Gray Lady softly, beginning to see that this had been no April Fool prank on her school, but a desperate heart-broken old woman afraid for her future. "Do not grieve," she said gently, "you look as if you would live dozens of years yet, and the little boys are quite husky; and as for me, I live in China especially to bring good news to such as you. May I not come every afternoon and tell you slowly about this comfortable news?"

"Oh, come often! Come often! I've tried everything else. But tell me slowly. Tell me slowly! Tell me now! I can't wait till tomorrow."

The Plain Gray Lady went without her evening rice that night; and when she went to bed she said to herself with a smile that she was glad "the wind bloweth where it listeth," especially when it brought pantaloons out of the sky.



Poor Granny! In spite of having everything planned so completely in her own mind, she was in sad doubt about her funeral! You can act it all out very dramatically by making paper horses with paper servants and a paper house to be carried through the streets in her funeral procession: when the grave is reached, burn the horses, the servants, the house, to show how she wanted these comforts sent on into the spirit world ahead of her. It will seem so very useless and pathetic and heathen that you will be sure to love the end of the story even better than before.

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"Get the coffin ready, and the man won't die."

"A dry finger cannot lick up salt."

"He who rides a tiger is afraid to dismount."

XVII

GRANNY'S COFFIN WAS VERY RED

VERY red. And very big. And very shiny. And very empty. Many, many times that day Granny had hobbled over on her lily-toes to peer inside it. She was dreadfully proud of it! It was so very handsome, so very expensive, and so very red. Red in China stands for good-luck, for happiness. Granny felt that it made her house a grand place indeed to have anything so gorgeous in the best room—she boasted about it to her neighbors, and she went so far as to send for Cynthia.

“Over-the-ocean woman,” she said, “I want you to see the fine present my son has just given me. Honorably step this way!”

Cynthia stepped. And there stood the coffin, only she was not quite sure whether it was really a coffin or not—it might be just a chest for storing clothes. But when she looked inside it seemed to her that she had never seen anything so very, very empty! She was more shocked than she had ever been in her whole life: she felt too sorry to

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say a word. Granny however talked enough for two:

"Isn't it beautiful? So red! And costing so much. It just shows what a good son I have and how much he thinks of me."

"Oh! Does it?" Cynthia gasped.

"Why of course it does! A careless, inattentive, unloving son might wait until the very last moment to buy his mother a coffin. Why, I'm tickled to pieces! I wish you could see the cheap affair old Mrs. Ming has in her house, *have* you ever seen it? She lives on the Street of the Twelve Red Rubies. I tell you, the old lady was quite ashamed of hers when she saw mine. And as for the mother of Mr. Huong next door, she will really die of envy if he doesn't get her one like mine. But do sit down; sit here, I beg of you. I have been very rude not to offer you a seat at once."

"This is much too high a seat," Cynthia objected politely, for you will remember that the chairs near the ancestral tablets were too honorable to be sat on until one had been urged at least three times. Cynthia, you see, had charming Chinese manners!

But for once her hostess did not care at all for

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ceremony; she fairly pushed Cynthia into the chair: "Please do not use up the air in idle talk," she begged, "there's no time to waste. Somehow I feel very queer today. I suppose it's because I'm so happy over my beautiful coffin."

"Yes," agreed our China Shepherdess, "I can see that it might make you feel queer. It even makes me feel queer! But I am glad that you are also so happy over it."

"Oh, very happy," repeated Granny in the solemnest voice you ever heard. "Very happy. Only—well!—you see, I'm such a little old woman and it's such a very big coffin. All last night I kept thinking how very dark and lonely it would be inside. I could even hear the howling."

"The howling?" Cynthia asked.

The old lady looked astonished. Was it possible that white people did not even die in the same way that yellow people died? "Yes, yes! the howling of my funeral procession as it will be when my friends go to call one of my three souls. Perhaps you don't know, though, that when a person dies one of those three souls goes straight to the temple to stay until the funeral, then the friends carry an empty sedan-chair to call the soul back. I suppose they always do come back!

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I worried about it all night, for just suppose my soul didn't come back. I worried too for fear my son had spent so much money on the coffin that he might skimp on my spirit house, my spirit furniture, my spirit cook, and the other spirit servants."

Cynthia, poor girl, looked more puzzled than ever. She had to ask what in the world a "spirit cook" was.

Granny, in her turn, looked puzzled: "What? Haven't you seen the shop on the Street of the Seventy Honest Merchants where they make paper houses and paper life-sized images of servants and horses to be burned at the grave so that those who go as 'guests on high' will have houses and furniture in the spirit world. Ai ya! how would I ever get along if he forgot all this?"

Cynthia was speechless!

"I don't suppose he could possibly forget to buy the huge paper image to go ahead of the procession and act as Mandarin Guide. He may be a busy man, but my son has lots of common sense. Just the same, I got to worrying for fear he wouldn't remember to guard the living as well as to take care of *me* when I'm a guest on high. For I'm the mother of sons and grandsons, and

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I keep reminding this oldest boy of mine that the day of a funeral must never fall on a day of the same name as the birth year of any member of the family, or a second death will happen in the family right away. The soothsayers aren't always as wise as they pretend! They might get the wrong date so easily. But I've been warning my daughters-in-law that if this should happen then the priest must be asked to make a straw image by binding twelve rice-stalks together, for if he buries this in the coffin it will be a substitute for the person who would otherwise have to die. Well, now you know a few of the things that make it so dangerous to die!"

Cynthia said gently: "I don't like to have you worry over things like that; didn't you know I had come to China especially to tell you——"

But the old lady interrupted her:

"You are young! What could you tell me? And besides I haven't told you half my troubles yet, because I'm a good bit of a Buddhist, and it's quite possible that when I die I may be turned into an animal of some sort and be sent back to earth to live through any number of other births—a cat, a dog, a frog, a mosquito: how do I know what I may become? It seems to me that there's

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too much for me to worry about, entirely too much. I'm very tired of worrying!"

"I should think you would be! And you really must let me say what I started out to tell you, that I came to China especially to bring you the good news that Jesus Christ has already made every possible preparation for you. He hasn't forgotten anything. He has written it all down in this letter to you. Listen: 'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for *you*. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.'"

Granny shook her head: "That isn't about *me*. I don't know that God. I never worshiped at His shrine. I never gave Him an offering. He wouldn't go to all the trouble of fixing up a mansion for an old woman who never had paid a bit of attention to Him! I knew these gods—there isn't one of them that really cares."

Cynthia took Granny's hand: "You honorably forget what I've told you every time I've come to call. You forget that this God *made* you! So

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of course He knows you! Of course He has your mansion ready! He promised, you know."

"Just tell me that all over again," mumbled Granny. "I'm only a stupid old Chinese woman, and I didn't sleep last night. You read me all over again what your Father God said."

Cynthia read it again. Granny sighed: "It doesn't seem possible He means me. Read it just once more!"

Cynthia read it once more.

"Dear me!" sighed Granny, "wouldn't it be fine if it were really meant for me. But there are so many gods, I could never be sure of knowing *yours*."

Cynthia told her a story. "I have a friend. She married a missionary. They lived across many oceans from their old home. They had a baby, but the baby fell ill; the mother had to take the baby back across those many oceans to her own home. But she kept thinking, 'I mustn't let Molly forget her father.' So every morning she held Molly before her husband's picture and taught her to lisp, 'Good morning, father!' Every single day for three years she did this, until finally the time came when the father could come home also. He reached the house sooner than he

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was expected and his wife was out, but in the nursery was little Molly playing on the floor. He was afraid to go in for fear the sight of a strange man might frighten her, but just then she looked up and the happiest little smile went over her face as she ran forward to meet him, calling, 'Good morning, father!' Oh, Venerable Grandmother, that's all death is: Some morning you will look up and find God standing in the doorway to the other life, and the minute you see His dear face you will drop everything and hurry to Him, crying, 'Good morning, Father, good morning!'"

The old lady had been nodding her head all through the story: "Molly wasn't scared! I mustn't be scared! But Molly knew that picture by heart; but I—how should I know what God is like?"

"His picture is in every story in the Bible," Cynthia said.

Granny laid her wrinkled old hands on the Bible: "Then just let me see quickly! Quickly! There's no time to lose."

Cynthia had a Blue Belle living under that roof-tree; and if you had been in China you could have seen, day after day, the loveliest sight in

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all the world, I think: frail old Granny peering carefully at the words she could not read while the Blue Belle spelled through the Bible stories slowly for her.

"Do you begin to see God any plainer?" she would ask anxiously.

"Well yes, I think I do," Granny would say, "it seems as if even an old woman couldn't be afraid of a God-Who-Healed-The-Sick-At-Sunset-time. That was such a good thing to do."

The youngest grandson piped up curiously: "But only yesterday you said you'd know Him anywhere because He was the God-Who-Blesses-Little-Children."

"So I did! So I did!" Granny nodded. "There never was a God before who bothered with a little child."

"A child like me?" asked the grandson.

"A child like you," nodded Granny.

"And a child like me!" the Blue Belle added, with a great pride in the God who loved girls as well as boys!

"Granny has a new smile-face!" every one said.

"Of course I have," Granny beamed, "and it's going to keep on being gladder yet because I've

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found out that I'm not going to turn into a frog or a dog or a cat or a mosquito when I die. Father God has told me so in His Letter to me. Read me what it says once more."

The Blue Belle read: "For we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

You can see for yourself that peace and happiness were coming to Granny. Somehow the empty coffin did not matter at all; for warm, sweet, tender, like a friend, the face of "Father God" emerged from those dear Bible stories. So that at dawn one Easter Sunday it was altogether natural for her to close her poor tired eyes and breathe her happy greeting: "Oh, good morning, Father, good morning!"

"And she wasn't a bit frightened," the little Blue Belle told Cynthia; "father is keeping very quiet about letting you plan a Christian funeral just as Granny wished."

The relatives were never so startled, so upset, so puzzled, so impressed as when the Chinese pastor read from the Book which Granny had loved: "I am the resurrection and the life. . . Though a man die, yet shall he live. . . O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy vic-

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tory? But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Surely you will like to sit in church next Easter Sunday morning remembering that it is in ways like this that the Saviour spreads His resurrection story round the world: from Granny's house to Neighbor Huong's, from Neighbor Huong's to Mrs. Ming's, from Mrs. Ming's to other homes all over town, until the whole earth shall be full of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea.



When you make this pedler to show in your class, cut *two* pedlers from heavy cardboard, cutting the bamboo pole double also. Then paste the heads, shoulders, and poles together. Be sure to cut the soles of the feet very flat and as large as possible, so that when the two sets of legs are spread apart the pedler can balance himself and his bundles. Miniature bucket and basket should be tied on each end of the pole; use deep pill-boxes or the small circular tin containers for adhesive tape, dental floss, etc. For this story you may want to use the house (Chapter XI), the idol (Chapter XI), and all the Blue Belles (Chapters IX and X).

TURNIP
MARKET:

"When the market is brisk the seller does not stop to wash the mud from his turnips."

"If you believe in gambling you will have to sell your house."

"If you want your children to lead a quiet life let them always be a little hungry and cold."

XVIII

THE MOTHER OF A MAH JONG CRY-BABY

THIS is the story of the baby who ended by having 101 mothers; although in the beginning she had only one, of course, just the same as any ordinary child. You will be astonished to know that when Cynthia first saw her she thought she was going to turn out to be a bucket of water or a vegetable; but that was not on account of her infantile looks, but on account of the peculiar baby-carriage in which she was taking the air on that lovely May day when a certain pedler saw Cynthia coming down the street and hurried to meet her.

I think he was probably saying to himself in Chinese, "These queer over-the-ocean persons have soft hearts, maybe she will want to buy of me." For the softness of the Plain Gray Lady's heart had become known here and there all over town, and it was only natural to hope that Cynthia might be the same sort of strange being.

Apparently she was not inclined to softness;

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for after glancing at the bamboo pole over his shoulder with a bucket of water splashing at one end and a basket of vegetables at the other, Cynthia said, "Not buying today!"

The pedler lowered his burdens carefully on the street and smiled a mysterious smile: "Honorable Lady, slowly stay! Slowly listen! Let me show you one little vegetable that can laugh—yes? One little vegetable that can cry—yes? One little good-enough-to-eat vegetable! A little potato with eyes that can see!"

Of course this sounded odd, to say the least! Cynthia's left foot lingered while her right foot started on.

The pedler hastily brushed aside the vegetables on top of his deep basket, and there—if you please!—lay something that had little arms, little legs. Needless to say, both of Cynthia's feet stood planted firmly in the street, and she could hardly get breath enough to say, "Do you mean to tell me that you are selling that baby?"

The pedler shrugged his shoulders: "Just a cheap little potato! Cheap! Very cheap!"

Cynthia wanted to cry. She was sure she was asleep; yet when she pinched herself she found she was awake. Wide awake! She wanted to

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shake the dreadful man. "Is it a girl?" she asked. He nodded, and repeated his "cheap little vegetable" harangue.

"How much?" Cynthia asked.

His eyes gleamed. He held up a few fingers to show how many strings of cash he wanted; in our money about three dollars. Cynthia could not, of course, carry heavy strings of Chinese money around with her, so she asked the pedler to come back to the mission at once, and she would pay him. She did not even bargain with him. "Soft! Soft!" he chuckled contentedly, as he dumped the vegetables back on the baby and swung his pole over his shoulder again.

"I've bought a baby!" Cynthia cried to Grandmother Gate-Woman excitedly. "Don't you let this man get away till I've paid him!"

She rushed up-stairs for the money. Grandmother Gate-Woman pushed aside the vegetables and lifted out the baby, looking shrewdly at the weazened little cheeks, the skinny arms. "It's no sort of a baby at all," she said to Cynthia, "it isn't fat, and it isn't strong. It isn't anything a baby should be. Now, Shepherdess, don't you go buying a no-good baby!"

But Cynthia paid the pedler and closed the gate

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on him! "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, selling babies this way!"

"Think what a glorious foster-mother I have fetched it!" said the pedler piously, and walked off chuckling.

Cynthia picked up her Boughten Baby anxiously, while Grandmother Gate-Woman wagged her head in melancholy fashion. Even the Plain Gray Lady looked depressed: "It's so sick, darling, so thin and pitiful! And I don't know a thing about bringing up babies."

"Don't you, indeed?" asked Cynthia. "Well, that needn't worry us, for I'm a dabster at babies. Haven't I brought up four little sisters and one little brother; mercy on us! What's one Boughten Baby more or less to *me*? And now for a bath, you little wail-bone!"

The Plain Gray Lady said that the Blue Belles ought to be called in: "For they're all older sisters, too, and who knows but that your 'Boughten Baby' may do as much good in town as our school."

"Goody gracious," chuckled Cynthia into the baby's ear, "ain't that lady expectin' just entirely too much of a muchness from you, Miss Wail-bone?" The Boughten Baby bellowed "Yes!"

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Cynthia filled a little tub with hot water. She dipped her finger in it carefully to test it. She undressed the baby. The Blue Belles stood around with their eyes as round as saucers: "O Shepherdess," they begged, "don't *wash* the baby! You will boil her, and she is not a vegetable! She will die! We never, never wash the babies in our homes."

"Don't you?" hummed Cynthia blissfully, undressing her baby.

"Truly yes, Shepherdess," echoed Grandmother Gate-Woman from the doorway, "she will die, if you boil her like that. Think of the babies born under my roof-tree, not one of them ever washed! Oh desist!"

"Nevertheless," said Cynthia firmly, "I expect to wash her every day," and into the tub went the baby. There are no words to print that infant's roar of rage and astonishment. The Blue Belles stood wringing their hands and saying in a sing-song chorus: "Alas! Alas! She boils the baby!"

Grandmother Gate-Woman pattered back to her gate where the Plain Gray Lady heard her praying: "Now Father God, please forgive the young Shepherdess for making it such a clean-to-

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death baby. Help her to know better tomorrow, Father God. Amen."

Surely you can understand from this why many heart-felt prayers are left unanswered; for Cynthia knew that baths were very Christian things and as good for boughten babies as for any other kind! Yet the next morning when the Blue Belles saw the tub being filled they implored her earnestly: "Teacher, do not wash her again! You washed her only yesterday, that ought to keep for a month, for a year, for a long, long time! Oh, please don't boil her again."

"A bath a day keeps the doctor away," sang Cynthia blithely, as she dipped the baby expertly. The Blue Belles simply ached over it: George flunked in every class all day. The Five Little Peppers dashed home and told their mother. Their mother told their aunts. Their aunts told their neighbors. Their neighbors told their neighbors. News of the clean-to-death baby spread from street to street in that end of town, and a great many mothers came to call. A great many mothers went home to wonder.

"How is that clean-to-death baby today?" people asked the moment they met and had said their polite "Have you eaten your rice?"

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“Eaten full, thank you. Well, I hear it’s getting to be a good-enough-to-love baby; you can’t believe all you hear, though; I thought I’d stop and ask that old gate-woman as I passed.”

Presently they were saying: “She feeds it buffalo milk; did you ever hear that babies liked milk?”

“Absurd!” said some. “Improper!” said others. But that was nothing compared with what Buffalo Bill said when Cynthia begged him to try milking a buffalo cow. Begging him was as hard as begging the cow; for neither she nor any of her sister cows had ever heard of being milked. They kicked Buffalo Bill till he was black and blue; but he nobly stuck to his job, simply because that silly over-the-ocean woman had warmed his heart.

So the Boughten Baby grew round and plump and very pleasant, a credit to bottles and baths. Her 101 mothers hung over her adoringly, and boasted day and night of her charms and her perfectly appalling cleanliness. Yet all this time Cynthia kept remembering the one real mother somewhere in town, with empty aching arms. She used to go to listen to the women praying to Kwang-Yin, the Goddess of Mercy, who has so

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many hundred hands that it is no wonder she is supposed to have power to protect from sorrow. There they would kneel, those women, and it was something like this each one said: "Great Mercy, great pity, save from misery, save from evil, broad, great, efficacious, responsive Kwang-Yin." Cynthia used to ask the women what their trouble was, and she often sent Grandmother Gate-Woman on a similar errand to that temple. One day the old woman said as usual, "Excuse my big rudeness, but could I help you?"

"I can hardly believe my ears!" exclaimed the younger woman, and urged by the friendly old soul she poured out the whole story of her misfortunes: How three men came to sit under the family rooftree day after day to gamble with her husband. She tiptoed past the room on household errands, yet the only sounds that ever broke the silence were the occasional rattling of dice, the occasional clattering of the bamboo-and-ivory Mah Jong pieces on the table; sometimes a man said, "Pung!" and sometimes he said, "Chow!"

"All day they do, and all night. The solemnest men in all the Middle Flowery Country, they never laugh, they never smile; you could not possibly tell from their faces what they are thinking,

THE MOTHER OF A MAH JONG CRY-BABY

and that is why I never guessed that my husband was losing until little by little his debts grew too big. He sold the red-lacquered chairs. But that was not enough. He sold the red-lacquered tables. Still not enough. He sold the old porcelain vases, centuries old. Not enough yet! He sold the copper pots, the old brass urns. Not enough. He sold the dishes. Not enough. Never, never enough. He sold and sold and sold, until there was not enough rice in the rice-pot, and my sons' faces grew pinched with hunger. My baby grew sick, so sick that I felt sure she had lost one of her three souls."

"What did you do?" asked Grandmother Gate-Woman.

The little mother told how she went out on the street at sunset-time with the baby's jacket, how she waved it and waved, calling frantically: "Come back, little lost soul, come back! Come back! Come back!" For of course she felt sure that if the lost soul could once see the familiar little jacket it would long to slip inside and go indoors contentedly. But she waved and waved, she called and called; and when she went back in the house the baby also was gone—gambled away by its father.

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Grandmother Gate-Woman said cautiously: "We have a baby under our roof-tree. A little good-to-love baby. Come with me and see her." But, of course, she never suggested that it might be this mother's baby. She led the way to the school and up to the improvised nursery where the Boughten Baby was busily trying to get all her toes into her mouth. "Just look at this baby!" proudly boasted Grandmother Gate-Woman.

The baby-less mother gave one surprised look, then picked up the baby hungrily. When Cynthia came in she knew at once that nobody but the real mother could croon like that, or hug like that. "Oh dear! Oh dear!" cried Cynthia to herself, "she'll take my Boughten Baby home with her." And her own heart nearly broke—to think of missing those quaint bias eyes, those cunning clutching fingers! But the mother shook her head: "It's my baby, but how could I take her home to my roof-tree? How could I hide her from her father? How could I feed her, when even my sons are hungry? Oh, no, I cannot take my baby, ever! Oh my precious jewel! My little ten thousand ounces of gold! U'm! U'm! U'm!"

THE MOTHER OF A MAH JONG CRY-BABY

Cynthia wiped her eyes: "I'll always be just as good as I know how to be to your baby," she said simply.

"Oh, I see your goodness sticking out all over my baby already," said the mother, poking the fat little cheeks and the dimpled elbows. "You are better with babies than I am! And yet I did well by my girl! I treated her just like her brothers. Why, on the day when I first took her to see my own parents, I daubed some soot from the bottom of the rice-pot on her forehead; for the pot is iron, and the soot could be a charm to give her boldness against all sorts of demons. And when she entered her second year I even let her choose her career. But this, of course, was foolish of me, wasn't it?"

Cynthia hated to admit it: "You see, I don't know what you mean?"

"Oh, don't you? Why, I put on the floor beside her a big basket full of twelve objects—things like a book, a suit of clothes, a piece of money, bread, a pair of scissors, seeds, abacus, and so on. My next-to-the-youngest boy grabbed the seeds from the basket when we let him chose his career; so of course we know he will be a farmer when he grows up. But girls can't have

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careers, and I think I did wrong to let this little baby try her luck in secret."

"What did she choose?" Cynthia asked, amused.

The Mah Jong Baby's mother looked a bit ashamed: "S-she c-chose a b-book!" she stammered. "Just fancy! That ought to mean she's going to be a scholar; but of course a girl could never be a scholar! I'm afraid I angered the gods."

But Cynthia was patting the cheek of the Boughten Baby: "A scholar? But of course she's going to be a scholar, she's begun already. It was on account of her we opened our mission kindergarten last month, because so many mothers came to inquire about their babies that we offered to take their four-year-old children in school every morning. Oh, yes, rest your heart! She'll be a scholar!"

About the time of parting there are no words with which to tell. Cynthia left them alone for a while; an hour later Grandmother Gate-Woman came in to say: "You will have a thanksgiving in your heart over what that mother said of you, Shepherdess! You see, I was telling her all about Father God: how kind He is, how He

THE MOTHER OF A MAH JONG CRY-BABY

seeks the lost, and even has a special Home up-stairs in heaven for us all. I thought maybe she couldn't believe at first; how can any of us poor Chinese take it in quickly? It is so good! But the baby's mother said to me, 'Why shouldn't I believe, when up-stairs in Heaven today I saw your Father God's wife taking care of my baby!' Now, Shepherdess, excuse me, but I think it's quite a lovely thing to have her call you Father God's wife—His '*Walk Behind*': Father God leads, you follow!"

Once upon a time somebody said: "*God could not be everywhere, and so He made mothers.*" But I think you will agree with me that this is hardly a true statement, since God *is* everywhere; and for the lands where the mothers need Him the most He has made—missionaries!



You will want to make a red sedan bridal chair in which Goody Two Shoes can ride to her mother-in-law's house; dress one of the Blue Belles in a red paper bridal dress with a red bridal veil covering her head and face. Lift her over a make-believe fire on the door-sill and have her bow the correct number of times to all the necessary persons and "spirits."

You will want to have a camera on hand, of course, to take a pretend-picture of the group of the Tsao family reading; and as a surprise to all who hear your story, you might end by distributing to them a "snap-shot"—strips of blue paper each with a picture of a Chinese person pasted on it. A search through old missionary magazines will bring all the pictures you need. Underneath each picture you might print a different Chinese proverb from among those given in this book, and have them read aloud; or, better yet, print the name of a Chinese city where you have a school or hospital of your very own.

UN-
N-
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BS:

“An ugly daughter-in-law cannot conceal that fact from her mother-in-law.”

“Shoes made by the elder brother’s wife are a pattern for the younger brother’s wife to copy.”

“If there is no oil in the lamp the wick is wasted.”

XIX

GOODY TWO SHOES GOT A MOTHER- IN-LAW

THERE had been one of the ten new Blue Belles who did not tinkle and ring true—Hi-di, the little Bring Brother girl who had sobbed that if her feet were unbound she would never get a mother-in-law. Cynthia had worried over that girl more than over all the other nine; indeed, that is what the Good Shepherd once did with His ninety-and-nine—the fact that they were all safe in the fold made Him all the more anxious to find the one little lost sheep.

Goody Two Shoes seemed to be the little odd sheep among the Blue Belles. She used to sit and stare at her big unbound feet soberly: “Ugly! Ugly!” she would groan. “I’ll never marry a mother-in-law with feet like these!” (For in China a girl does not speak of marrying a husband but always of marrying a mother-in-law, the reason for which you shall soon see.)

“She’s nothing but a stolid, solid little lump of Chinese clay!” sighed Cynthia. “She hasn’t

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been molded or shaped into anything at all during any of these days of school." Aloud she said: "Good shoes! Good feet! Sensible! Comfortable! Pretty!"

Goody Two Shoes moaned: "Excuse me, rudely speaking. Ugly feet! My life is ruined."

This was really rather funny, and of course very foolish; so one day Cynthia said in an off-hand fashion: "I do wish somebody would tell me the story of the famous Peking Bell! I've been waiting for some one to tell me ever since I came to China."

"I can tell it!" boasted Goody Two Shoes, eagerly, and told the well-known Chinese legend of the old bell-maker who was having trouble in casting a great bell. He made it once, but it came out imperfect. He made it twice, and it came out imperfect again. So finally he called in a soothsayer who, after much wise hemming and hawing, said that his luck would never turn unless a maiden would mix her blood with the molten mass of metal. Then the bell would be perfect! In order to help her father, without a moment's hesitation, the bell-maker's young daughter plunged straight into that seething, bubbling, boiling vat; and, as she plunged, a workman

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caught at her shoe and pulled it off. The bell was a perfect success, but to this very day every stroke that it strikes is followed by a low wailing note like the Chinese word for shoe (*hsieh*) which is said to be poor Ko Ai calling for her lost shoe!

“Ah, my dear little Goody Two Shoes,” Cynthia said, “you are to be just another Ko Ai. Perhaps you too can find a way—a Christian way to make your father’s life a success. Or perhaps it is your country which you are to save by spending your life sacrificially wherever you go, for there are so many people with broken bits of trouble to be mended, broken thoughts to be put together to form a whole. Throw yourself in and mend something, dear girl! Don’t just sit wailing for your little lost shoes, your useless little golden lilies! We’ve given you two big good new feet so that you can do a big good new piece of work for China. Do it, my dear!”

Goody Two Shoes looked very glum and moody. She had liked telling the story, but she certainly did not like having the story applied to herself. Little she dreamed how soon she herself was going to be thrown into a whole new set of circumstances as seething and bubbling as the bell-maker’s boiling metal. For one day, after

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only seven months of school, her father came with a sedan-chair to carry her to her home in the next town. There was to be a wedding in the family, he said, and he thought she had better come home for the celebration.

Goody Two Shoes was greatly excited herself, and as for the other scholars their little blue-cotton trousers were dancing here and there all over the school as the Blue Belles cried: "Think of all the wedding-cakes Hi-di will have! The salted nuts! The rich meat balls! The puddings! The candy! Lucky Hi-di!"

"No, lucky me!" grinned George in her sensible fashion. "I'd rather stay in the lesson-learn-school and store my stomach with learning."

"So would I!" echoed Jasmine Flower.

"And I!" repeated Luminous Jade.

Off rode Goody Two Shoes in her sedan-chair, a little glad and a little sober. But when she reached home she was altogether sober, for would you believe it? *The wedding was to be her own!* She could hardly believe her ears.

"Cannot! Cannot!" she cried. "I am a school-goer—over the hills in that school there is my own bed-board with its little blue quilt—there is my own primer with its words of wisdom—

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there is my own rice-bowl—my own chop-sticks
——”

“Be still, you big-footed little piece of baggage!” scowled her mother crossly. “If we had dreamed that that school would unbind your golden lilies we would never have sent you there. Never! You have no idea how quiet we have had to keep about those feet of yours—not a word to the go-between! He knew what your feet were like before you went away, and has doubtless reported them to your mother-in-law as three inches long. You must keep them hidden as much as possible just at first, you unfortunate big-foot girl! We have boasted at great length of your learning, however, so that the go-between got many extra strings of cash from the family in order to buy such a scholarly daughter-in-law.”

“Not a scholar! Not a scholar!” wailed the little first-year-primer Blue Belle. “Oh, I don’t want a mother-in-law—I want my school! I want my Shepherdess!”

“Fiddle-dee-dee!” clucked her mother sternly, for of course it made no least difference what such a mere child wanted; and that is how Goody Two Shoes got a mother-in-law far quicker than she liked, in spite of her unbound lilies. But

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Chinese weddings move slowly, and it took time to pack her boxes. If you had been there you would have understood why daughters were called "lose-money-persons," for there were boxes and boxes and boxes full of embroidered jackets, embroidered trousers, embroidered shoes, as well as presents which had to be sent to the groom and presents of money to the go-between who had arranged the match. And in this particular case, the father of Goody Two Shoes was rather nervous, fearing that at any moment the fact of her big feet might cause trouble; not that the wedding could be stopped, for engagements in China are as binding as marriages, but high words might be said and he might "lose face"—nothing could be more awful than to feel publicly ashamed. However, the Luck Doctor had chosen the only possible lucky day: a date on which nobody in the bride's family and nobody in the groom's family had ever died.

Goody Two Shoes was dressed in her bright red bridal coat and trousers, satin, embroidered with gold dragons. There was a story about the making of the coat, for the seamstress broke a needle while sewing a seam, which was such bad luck that the family had had to buy more goods

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and cut out a new coat. The whole wedding seemed unlucky—a big-foot bride, broken-hearted; needles splitting in two, spoiling an expensive coat.

Finally the hour came to leave. A long red veil was hung all over the face of the little bride, and her father led her out to a great red sedan-chair—the red chair in which only brides may ride; the minute she stepped out in the street the door was banged shut behind her to keep the family luck from following her! And all this time they were pinching Goody Two Shoes so that she would cry and act unwilling to leave home as every Chinese bride should act; but I am sure you know already that no pinching was necessary; Goody Two Shoes was able to do her own weeping and sobbing.

Bing-bang-bing! snapped the family firecrackers in front of her and behind her as her gaudy chair was carried through the streets. Behind her in a long procession came coolies bearing the great red wedding-boxes full of the jackets and trousers and shoes, other coolies were burdened to their very chins with piles of quilts, furniture, clocks. It really made a fine showing.

“My! My!” chuckled the people in the street,

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pressing closer to see whatever there was to see. "Her family have done well by her! But it's a bad business raising girls for other people. What good will her family ever have of her again, now that she's going to belong to her mother-in-law?"

Red paper was pasted on the gate-posts of the bridegroom's home, and a special wedding fire-basket was blazing in front of the door-sill. The bridegroom tapped on the big red chair with his fan; Goody Two Shoes knew that the knock meant "We are there!" The curtains of the chair were parted, and she felt herself being lifted out. She was carried slowly over that little blazing fire, for evil spirits simply cannot endure any heat; and you may be sure that the bridegroom's family did not want any unknown demons to come in with the bride. Since it would be the worst of luck for a bride to stumble over the door-sill, Goody Two Shoes was carried right into the house where she and the groom then knelt down side by side and bowed their heads to the ground so many times that I should think they might have been dizzy—they bowed to the bridegroom's parents, they bowed to the bridegroom's ancestral tablets, they bowed to the bridegroom's household gods, they bowed to the

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bridegroom's go-betweens who had arranged the match, and of course they bowed to the guests.

And then! then! then! as they rose to their feet the bridegroom lifted the red veil from the face of his little bride and took the first look he had ever had at Goody Two Shoes. By this time she was much too frightened to cry, and she looked exactly as she ought to look—her eyes primly gazing at the floor, her hands meekly folded in front of her, the nice yellow oval of her face bent modestly downward.

The bridegroom was relieved: "This scholar will make a very good person to dwell in the inner apartments," he said to himself. But what *he* thought really did not matter very much; it was his mother who counted.

"Turn around!" she ordered.

Goody Two Shoes made herself into a very shaky merry-go-round.

"Not such a stupid face!" croaked somebody's harsh old voice. "And that's a fine red satin suit, the very best quality, handsomely embroidered."

"True! True! A fine red suit, handsomely embroidered," echoed the less important relatives.

"But look at her feet! Look at her feet! Can

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"I believe my eyes?" thundered the mother-in-law in disappointment and rage.

"Yes, look at her feet! Look at her feet! Can we believe our eyes?" echoed the relatives. They stared and stared and stared at Goody Two Shoes, who seemed to have turned to ice.

"Sadly we have been cheated! Wickedly, wickedly deceived! Look at her feet!" groaned the old lady.

"Look at her feet!" echoed the obliging relatives.

"Awful!"

"Dreadful!"

"A regular working-woman's feet!"

"Impossible!"

"Huge!"

Poor Goody Two Shoes was so embarrassed that she felt like the most enormous giant ever made: her head seemed to bump the ceiling, her feet seemed to stretch from wall to wall, she wondered if anybody else had ever been so wide, so high. Then suddenly she began shrinking and dwindling until there was absolutely nothing left of her. "I'm only as big as a salted almond," she thought. "How nice! They can't see me now. I'll fall through a crack and disappear."

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All of which proves how nervous she was: for actually she was the same Goody Two Shoes as ever! Only, when the scathing remarks were hottest, the bridegroom himself spoke up—he said unbelievable things; he said that an edict had been passed forbidding Chinese women to bind their feet; he said that in the big seaport cities this was being obeyed; only little conservative inland cities like theirs were behind the times; everywhere else women of education had big feet. He himself had seen ten thousand of them in Shanghai.

Of course this threw cold water on the ladies. They decided to keep quiet in his presence; and the wedding went forward as Chinese weddings generally do, with a great deal of feasting for several days. But a curious thing was happening to Goody Two Shoes: when she was loneliest she used to pretend that she was in school, and one day she suddenly remembered the story of the Peking bell. “The new Shepherdess said I was another Ko Ai, that maybe I would have to sacrifice myself to help others. Well, here I am! Thrown into the midst of a lot of disagreeable women! Greatly, greatly must I try to be Ko Ai.”

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From that day, instead of being glum and meek and lonely, she began to pretend that she was a combination Cynthia, Amazing Grace, Plain Gray Lady. She was too comical for words. She was jolly like Cynthia, sensible like Amazing Grace, wise like the Plain Gray Lady. She flung herself into the life of that home like the heroine she wanted to be, she was pleasant to the sisters-in-law and merry with the nieces and nephews. She told about the Mah Jong cry-baby and even tried to make the babies under the rooftree "clean-to-death" with baths.

"She is trying to steal our hearts," smiled the sisters-in-law who were young.

"She won't succeed!" sneered the sisters-in-laws who were older. "There is no good in that girl. She will not, will not, *will not* bow before the kitchen god or the idols on the godshelf! She ought to be spanked."

But nobody spanked her. For the most part she was too unimportant to notice, for around the courtyard were so many houses rambling one into the other that they formed a regular village, everybody a daughter-in-law or a grandchild of the stern old lady who had no use at all for Goody Two Shoes when so many other problems kept

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coming up. One day, however, there was the sound of chair-bearers along the narrow street; Cynthia was always amused at the bearers as they trotted patiently hour after hour carrying her sedan-chair and calling all sorts of remarks to the people in the road: "Clear the way!" "Scrape your shins!" "Open your head!" "Chair coming! Chair! Chair!" At last they set down her chair before a certain gate, and when she and the Plain Gray Lady walked in Goody Two Shoes had the surprise of her life—the Shepherdesses had come to call! Oh, such introductions, such bowings!

Sisters-in-laws came hurrying from all the houses around the courtyard. Nieces and nephews scampered in. Everybody politely pulled the sleeves of the guests: "Sit here! Sit up higher!"

But Cynthia hung back, modestly. The Plain Gray Lady hung back modestly.

"Good enough manners!" mumbled the old mother-in-law begrudgingly.

It took ten full minutes before they could sit down and have tea. But the Plain Gray Lady knew exactly how to win the approval of all ladies, even hostile old ladies! She asked a hun-

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dred questions: How old are you? (The politest question possible.) How many sons have you? How many grandsons? What a handsome room! What fine daughters-in-law! What bright grandchildren! Could all these little girls read? No? (By which you will see how gradually she was bringing the conversation around to Goody Two Shoes.)

“No,” said the mother-in-law, “none of us can read.”

“Oh, what a pity! *None* of you?”

“Well, yes, one of us. This little bride I have just gotten for my youngest son can read a little, and she is trying to teach my granddaughters. But it is nothing. Nothing. A thing not worth noticing.”

“Excuse me for impolitely differing,” begged the Plain Gray Lady, “but surely it is something to be noticed. Might I put you to the great trouble of hearing them read?”

“No trouble! No trouble!” the mother-in-law was forced to say politely. And presently there was a lovely picture to be seen: Goody Two Shoes and five wee nieces each with a sheet of paper reading aloud in a sing-song fashion but at the tops of voices: “Let your light so shine

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before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

"Wonderful!" cried the Plain Gray Lady, clapping her hands.

"Wonderful!" echoed the diplomatic Cynthia, clapping her hands even louder.

The mother-in-law tossed her head a little, partly with pride, partly with pleasure: "Oh, that's nothing!" she boasted. "They read longer than that quite often. But it's not a thing to be noticed—just little girls."

Cynthia had an inspiration. "Could I be permitted to take a photograph of them, Venerable One? In my over-the-ocean home I have little sisters who would love to see your glorious little grandchildren reading. See, I have my camera with me!"

But the old lady had no idea about this photograph business. How was it done anyhow? How could you send to America such a parcel of flesh-and-blood children? Was it magic? That thing looked like a box. Was it a box? Certainly she would never consent to have even granddaughters wedge their heads into a box as small as that.

Cynthia tried not to laugh. "They shall not

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be wedged!" she promised. "They need only stand and read. It will be quite safe. My little box is like a house with a window. Behind the window is a special piece of paper which knows how to take pictures of the things in front of the window."

The old lady was interested: "Then please condescend to take a picture of me. These little nuisances are hardly worth taking."

The faces of the little nuisances fell about a yard and a half. Such a crushing disappointment! But the Plain Gray Lady immediately suggested a group picture with *everybody* in it, old and young. "Then we can write home to our friends in America that this is the clan of the house of Tsao, where five bright little granddaughters have learned to read."

But the old lady objected: "That is entirely too much flattery for five such little trifles. I also must be seen reading. Give me something to read, and then let your box look at us."

Cynthia smiled at such vanity. But a Bible was given the old lady and tracts to all the others. They stood there like stiff statues, with the most painfully fixed expressions on their faces, the most scholarly scowls on their solemn foreheads.

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And the old lady scowled hardest of all. She scowled too wisely! For Goody Two Shoes, looking over her shoulder, cried: "Oh, excuse me! Excuse me! But the Venerable One is holding her Book upside-down. Excuse me, but print belongs this side up. Allow me to fix it! Excuse me!" And she turned the Bible the proper way round.

But the old lady was simply furious. She felt that she had lost face. "Simpleton!" she snapped, and slapped the ears of Goody Two Shoes so hard that tears came dripping down her cheeks like tiny Niagara Falls.

Goody Two Shoes wiped away Niagara hastily. From somewhere in her new heart she fetched up an April-showery smile: "Excuse me!" she bowed.

The old lady grew ashamed of herself: "This silly wifeling has no proper spirit!" she explained rather lamely. "We are ready. Let your box look at us."

The box "looked." There was a little click; all was over! Then Cynthia said: "Now you can smile all you want to! Smile, please, as if you saw——"

"A little birdie!" laughed the Plain Gray

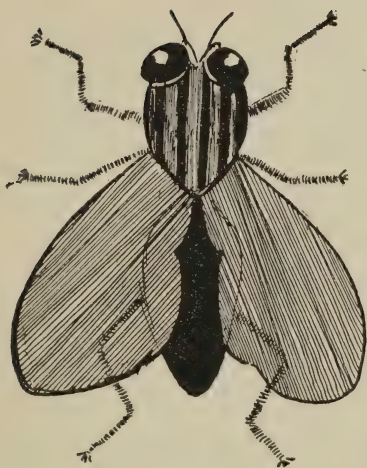
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Lady, wiggling her fingers in midair like a regular professional photographer.

The clan of the house of Tsao relaxed from scholars into gigglers. "But where is the birdie?" they giggled. Cynthia let her box "look" at those giggles; there was another click.

"Thank you," she said.

And when she mailed the snapshots to America this is what she wrote: "We sent a little candle from our school one day, such a stupid little candle that we feared it might be blown out. But here it is, letting its light so shine that some day (if we all watch and help and pray) the clan of the house of Tsao is going to glorify our Father who is in heaven. The candle's name is Goody Two Shoes."



Swat
The Fly
and
Save
The Child



No wonder the Blue Belles wanted to scamper away from Cynthia's giant fly! For on the soles of their feet flies have pads of very fine hairs: little *hooked* hairs which are the most perfect collectors of all kinds of microscopic dirt; it almost looks as though Glorious Fighter and Heavenly Repose had no more to be afraid of a mere fly than of the most horrific idol in town. You will, of course, find it great fun to make this poster yourself. If the wings were made of stiff black tarlatan how effective they would be.

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"Mix with mandarins and grow poor."

"Men's hearts are like iron and the rule of the mandarins like a furnace."

"An honest magistrate has lean clerks; a powerful god has fat priests."

"Let a dog bite a scholar and no one cares, but if a scorpion sting a mandarin sympathizers come in such crowds as to break down the doors."

XX

PRESUMPTUOUS CYN AND THE MANDARIN

It was a fly that began this story. A fly, and a Bible verse. The fly arrived in time to have breakfast with Cynthia. He was a perfect nuisance. He sat on her nose and practised finger exercises until she swept him away in disgust. Then he sat on her oatmeal and made faces at her by rubbing his legs over his nose in a most ill-bred fashion. She swept him away in still greater disgust. He did not mind! He started on a brisk walking tour up and down her arm, exactly as Cynthia herself had one time paced the steamer deck—so many rounds making a mile. She shooed him away, and the little rascal balanced on the rim of her milk-glass, teetering back and forth in utmost Chinese glee. “I’m overwhelmed! I’m low in my mind over that fly!” Cynthia cried.

“What? One fly?” asked the Plain Gray Lady.

“Oh, mercy no! But I’m multiplying him by

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all the flies in town. I'm seeing everybody's breakfast swarming with flies. I'm seeing the markets with fruit and meat and fish all black and buzzing with flies. I'm seeing babies with flies marching in vast armies up and down their legs and arms, climbing the mountains of their little noses, crawling into the crater of their little mouths. And I'm suddenly sick to death of flies. Just sick to death of them. I think it's time we got rid of flies in this city!"

That was at breakfast.

At prayers, immediately following, Amazing Grace read the Nineteenth Psalm in her calm lovely voice, the Blue Belles sitting with their quiet hands resting on their little blue-cotton trousers—looking as they always looked at prayer-time: very sweet and quite too good to be true! But this morning Cynthia's fly came buzzing through the doorway and went from Blue Belle to Blue Belle, sitting on noses, sliding down cheeks, tickling foreheads, buzzing here, buzzing there.

Out of all that psalm, Amazing Grace selected for her special text the verse: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me."

PRESUMPTUOUS CYN AND THE MANDARIN

“Now what,” asked Amazing Grace, “what is a presumptuous sin?”

The Blue Belles wrinkled their dear yellow brows into regular bow-knots as they thought and thought. Cinnamon Flower said maybe it meant taking something that didn't belong to you! Elegant Virtue said maybe it meant acting as if you knew a lesson when the teacher knew you didn't! George said it was trying to do something too hard for a person of your particular age and ability; (undoubtedly she was remembering her dragon!) but this answer was so good that Cynthia fell to thinking about herself: “I'm a Presumptuous Cyn every day of my life,” she sighed, and just then the fly tickled her nose.

This was enough to set her thinking: Would it be too presumptuous to try to rid this city of flies? But when and where and how? *When?* “Well, today!” vowed Cynthia. *Where?* “Why, in school of course!” *How?* Ah, that was the puzzler. How indeed? But at this moment there came the sound of firecrackers, the thumping of drums, and the tramp of feet on the cobblestone street. Grandmother Gate-Woman came padding in on her straw sandals to say: “That was the great Mandarin passing by. He

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has been on a visit and is just returning home with all his chair-bearers and runners. But Father God doesn't want me to be afraid of a Mandarin, I guess; so I just opened the gate and handed him a tract. Was that all right? It wasn't too pushing, was it? Or too——" she hesitated for the proper word.

"Presumptuous!" Cynthia supplied. "Well, no; I think, too, that if it wasn't presumptuous for you, certainly it can't be presumptuous for me, either. I'll begin with the Mandarin myself."

But down in her heart Cynthia had a real awe of this pompous, important gentleman, in his long rich satin coat and his black cap with the peacock feather—

"Stuck a feather in his cap
And called it mandarin—in,"

she quoted to herself occasionally. But today she said: "He's just one man; he's just one important but ignorant man; he doesn't know there is any world worth copying outside the walls of his city. He's nothing but my little Buffalo Bill on a bigger, more awe-inspiring scale. I must try to win him over!"

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Aloud, to the Plain Gray Lady, she announced: "You behold in me, Madam, the one and only Board of Health in town. Moreover, I'm about to begin my hygienic, prophylactic, sanitary career this very moment!"

"Congratulations! Might one inquire how you will begin your operations?"

"By a poster! Just like they do in our little old U. S. A.—wait till you see it!"

She had not long to wait for Cynthia flew to her room and hastily painted a truly enormous fly in the very center of a piece of cardboard: he was so very big and black that the little blue-trouserer child in one corner of the poster could hardly be blamed for shivering in its boots as it looked up in terror. In the opposite corner soon appeared the slogan in Chinese:

SWAT THE FLY AND SAVE THE CHILD

When the school-bell rang she flew to her classroom and lectured learnedly on flies: their habits, the diseases they brought, the menace they were to babies and children and grown-ups. The Blue

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Belles sat with their mouths wide open, simply fascinated. Cynthia was afraid the lecture might have gone in one ear and out the other, so she arranged with Mr. Pepper for compositions on the subject to be brought in the next day. Here are the shortest and the longest, also the poorest and the best: (the second one by George!)

FLIES

I wish to write about flies. There is one kind called a spider, he sits up-stairs in a room and makes webs. There are also blue-bottled flies in barns. Flies eat things. Flies two wings can fly fast. When we try to catch them we can't. Some places have more flies, some less. We have more.

THE FLY

Does the fly seem little? He is big when you make an arithmetic add of 1 fly + 2 flies + numbers 3, 4, 5, 2,000, 10,000, and so on forever as long as you can. Do his legs look silly? They are fuzzy; on the fuzz he catches a special dirty sickness from everything he touches and that makes his legs a horrid thing to have touch any one.

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Follow one fly one day. It is morning, he gets out of bed. He sits on the dog's tail. That is not very nice, but nicer than when he sits on dog's nose. The nose is wet. The fly buzzes the house, he crawls over the pig. The pig is covered with street mud. The fly can hardly pull his legs loose. That is also not nice. The fly crawls over the beggar's face. The beggar is a leper. This is less nice than anything so far. Then the fly goes to see baby boy. Baby boy is preciousness to nice lady mother, but the fly does not care. He tickles baby boy's mouth with dirty legs. Off those dirty legs come all the sicknesses gathered from leper, mud, pig, dog, street. Baby boy though precious falls sick; very too much sick. Baby boy dies. Lady mother drops big tears out of her eyes. Lady grandmother drops other tears. Little fly boasts: "See what I do in Chinese town! I walk into any rice-bowl I please. I make everybody I please very too much sick." Well, it is too bad. The Shepherdess could make a stop maybe.

When Mr. Pepper read the papers he nearly fainted. "Greatly excuse me," he said to Cynthia, bowing, "I must apologize. The composi-

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tions are not good to read for a lady. They are very unkindly. I am ashamed. My miserable pupils should be spanked."

"Let's spank the flies instead," laughed Cynthia. "I'm starting a crusade today, so please give me all the compositions."

The Plain Gray Lady read them delightfully: "Wonderful! Wonderful!" she cried. "George has found her second dragon to slay!"

Cynthia nodded, and that very afternoon she went to the yamen to pay a visit to the Mandarin, armed with the poster and those most unladylike compositions, Amazing Grace chaperoning her. The Mandarin was never so surprised in his life. Imagine calling about—flies! He quoted a well-known Chinese proverb at Cynthia: "*When heaven rears a man he grows very fat; when men rear a man he is but skin and bones.*" Therefore what can I do? What can I do? If heaven wills it, baby boys die."

But Cynthia was very proud to be able to quote another Chinese proverb in her turn: "*Men's hearts are like iron, and the rule of the mandarins like a furnace.*" For your honor has but to endorse our plan, and how the hearts of the people will soften! And how many less

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funerals there will be in town—you could even boast yourself of a great population where men never die, where babies always grow to old age—just imagine it!”

The Mandarin clasped his hands over his stomach. He closed his eyes. It looked as if he were certainly picturing the felicities of such a town. Cynthia left him nodding his head solemnly as if in approval; but she was not at all sure about him, so she left the poster behind her. On the way out toward the street she was impressed anew by the loveliness of his quaint old palace, for the gateways through his walls were cut in shapes—some were circles, “Moon Gate”; some were cut like vases, “Jar Gate”; his windows had dragon patterns over them; his great flagged courtyards were probably centuries old; wisteria climbed his walls, and lovely roses. “This is sheer fairyland,” she thought. And then with a smile, added, “But there’s a fly in the ointment.” She hurried home and persuaded Mr. Pepper to paint on a long red paper a true story of what had been done in another Chinese town.

The following afternoon Cynthia rolled the three yards of story into a scroll and paid a

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second call on the Mandarin, with Amazing Grace. She quoted a Chinese proverb at him: "Past events are as clear as a mirror; future events are as dark as lacquer."

"True!" he said, clapping his hands over his stomach and wagging the feather in his cap. Cynthia unrolled the scroll and Amazing Grace read the true story of the town of Tengchowfu where once upon a time every plan known to heathendom had been tried to rid the town of cholera, yet the sick died daily by the hundreds. The people even tried "going over into a new year" to deceive the gods and evil spirits into a belief that the unlucky year was now past and a new year had come for other good spirits to rule. People put on their best clothes, they beat drums, they fired firecrackers, they paid calls and feasted exactly as if it were really New Year's. But the celebration only spread the cholera quicker; from all over town people carried their sick and laid them before the shrine of the god of bewitchment, hoping he might cast off the spell. But this only spread the cholera quicker. Mourners were in the street day and night following funeral processions. Then into that town came two Christian doctors who knew that flies

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were the chief agents in spreading the disease. Two hospitals were started; flies were swatted diligently; and after several months of wonderful service that one town adopted for all time the Christian's way of health and safety.

The Mandarin nodded his head importantly. "Past events are as clear as a mirror," he quoted aloud, as Cynthia arose to depart, leaving the three-yard story behind her.

But the third day she returned with six of her Blue Belles, scrubbed as clean as could be—Fragrant Gentility dressed in her Sunday-go-to-meeting purple pantaloons, of course. Each Blue Belle carried a bright yellow placard. They spoke their "pieces" bravely, and tried not to be worried by the majesty of the great man before them.

"If you please, Your Honor," began George, the dragon-killer, "we would like to start a fly-killing contest in town. We six are going to see who of us can get the most people to sign our placards promising to 'swat the fly and save the child.' We would be overcome with grateful emotion if you would graciously condescend to sign one of our placards yourself."

At this point it was the Mandarin himself who

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was overcome with emotion: "I never killed a fly in my life!" he said pompously.

"Flies," began George, "have very naughty legs. In the fuzz they carry a special sickness from everything they touch. The child of the Magnificent Mandarin and the child of the thin coolie are all alike to flies——"

"Yes! Yes!" interrupted the Mandarin, hastily. "I have read a paper stating all those facts. Indeed, I have thought of nothing but flies for three days."

"So have we!" beamed the Blue Belles, and Fragrant Gentility stepped forward modestly: "Perhaps you would sign here?"

The Mandarin clapped his hands six times. In came six secretaries. Such wonderful men! The Blue Belles gasped with admiration. "Sign your names on those placards," the Mandarin ordered. The secretaries signed. "And now," continued the Mandarin, waving his hand in dismissal, "I hope this may be the end of the whole matter."

"I hope so, too," Cynthia agreed pleasantly. "You have been more than gracious! I am lost in the contemplation of your distinguished courtesy. Certainly the like of this has never happened to me in my own country."

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The Mandarin was obviously much pleased. "Of course," as Cynthia explained later to the Plain Gray Lady, "I never have been in the habit of visiting presidents or governors or even mayors, at home. But I think he feels I'm a person of some consequence."

"And aren't you?" smiled the Plain Gray Lady.

The Fly Campaign was a great success. The Blue Belles learned by heart George's composition, and "orated" it with great eloquence to many an astonished family. But Cynthia knew that the idea had really *taken* when a certain butcher, on the Street of the Seventy Honest Merchants, covered his meat with mosquito-netting and placed outside his shop a brilliant green placard announcing boastfully, "For sale—meat on which a fly has never stepped!"



The simplest way to make a pagoda is to cut from red cardboard two patterns of the pagoda front shown here; make them very high so that they can be glued to the front and back sides of a long narrow box in which girdles or stays have been bought. Blacken the portion of the pagoda which is dark in this cut. It is also possible to make extra shelving red roofs to slip through slits at the narrowest part of each of the seven roofs; these can then project at picturesque angles. To secure an evenly balanced pattern fold a piece of newspaper, and beginning at the fold draw one-half the pagoda. Cut this out, unfold, and outline it on the red cardboard.

The old red-roofed pagoda which was a landmark just outside the walls of Cynthia's city was built centuries ago by a widow as a memorial to her husband.

CHINESE PROVERBS:

"To save one man's life is better than to build a seven-storied pagoda."

"The loftiest towers rise from the ground."

"Thatch your roof before rainy weather, dig your well before you become parched with thirst."

XXI

THE CHAIR ON THE ROOF

It was going to be a holiday. Or at least that was what the Plain Gray Lady said it would be. But as Cynthia sighed that night, "If this is your idea of a holiday, little saint, then what, oh what, is your idea of a work-day?" The Plain Gray Lady referred her to the dictionary, and tired though she was, Cynthia opened it at the word holiday and read, "A holy-day."

"Of course! That's exactly what it has been, a holy day. I shall never forget it as long as I live." Which was mostly due to old Deacon Ding and the chair on his roof.

Deacon Ding was so very old that his long white beard hung down on his chest like those which you see on the patriarchs. His kind old face was seamed and wrinkled until it looked like the relief-map of some foreign country. If you asked me what that country was, I should not know what to say, but Deacon Ding would probably have chuckled, "America." He was very fond of America, and one day the Plain Gray

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Lady had a letter from him, in English. It was a very beautiful letter :

“I am very gladly that you come back from America on top. I thanking God that I can see you once in this world bequickly. When you are gone that makes us very sorrow. Now beg you permitting me you come here to give me a good Christian nourishment for my soul, for I knowing God does not let me burden this heavy laden longer. The wemen of my village that you love wish for their shepherdess and cry in the night missing you.”

The Plain Gray Lady said at once: “Suppose we take a holiday tomorrow and ride out to see him. It’s only six miles off.”

A basket of lunch was prepared, and early the next morning Cynthia climbed into one sedan-chair, the Plain Gray Lady into another. The chair-bearers started off at a jog through the narrow streets calling as usual: “Clear the way!” “Scrape your shins!” “Open your heads!” “Chair coming!” The Street of the Seventy Honest Merchants was beginning to wake up as the merchants took down their shop

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fronts, long gaudy signs flapped before each shop—a giant boot before the shoe-store, a gilded fan before a fan emporium. The coolies bore the chair through the little narrow streets so full of donkeys heaped high with baskets of vegetables, of wheelbarrows heaped high with bundles and lily-foot women, of pedlers heaped high with brooms, pots, and pans, of sweetmeat-sellers. Once outside the city gates, there was Buffalo Bill to be seen on top of Two Horns, and old Aunt Ling driving her flock of geese down the roadway, while peasants were working knee-deep in the rice-fields, and the slender old red-roofed pagoda seemed to watch them with age-old indifference: "Peasants come and peasants go, but I last on forever."

At the first village the news spread like wildfire: "The Teacher! The Teacher! The Teacher has come to town!" A crowd gathered, and the Plain Gray Lady gave a Bible talk and handed tracts to every one. Old women crowded nearer to ask questions. Young women elbowed up to tell her secrets. Children, too, had something special to be whispered in the Plain Gray Lady's ears.

"At this rate, we shall never get to Deacon

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Ding's," smiled Cynthia, for the next village had a school with an ex-Blue Belle teacher, a girl who beamed with delight to show off her little classes to the Real Teacher. Was she doing everything properly? Was it wrong to spank Fragile Lily for making faces so abominably at Old Pink Jade? It was? Oh dear! Oh dear! She had questions enough to last a week, and the Plain Gray Lady promised to stop on the way back. For she knew she must hurry to reach Deacon Ding's, and she knew she would be stopping all along the way.

"Look at that chair on the roof!" cried Cynthia. "What is it there for?"

"Ask Deacon Ding," said the Plain Gray Lady. The old man was delighted to see her. He reminded Cynthia of Abraham when the angels of the Lord came down to call—he was so humble and so gracious. His grandchildren were tremendously proud of him: "Grandpa," they said, "the new Shepherdess has asked about the chair. Tell her the whole story, right from the very beginning."

"Well," said Deacon Ding, "there was once a little boy, and he was lame. He did not matter to any one; was he not the ninth son, and was he

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not lame? Since the gods were evidently bored and indifferent to him, the family was also. He had kicks all day long, and slaps."

"That little boy was Grandpa," whispered Tender Perfume softly, afraid that Cynthia might not catch the point of the story.

"One day a foreign devil came to live in town. Immediately the wells went dry, the chimneys smoked, the whole luck changed. Men told each other that the white man had magic power to make himself invisible and slip in or out of closed doors, he could poison rice in the rice-bowls one mile off, he could stupefy children—do you wonder that I, a little lame boy, was stiff with fright whenever I saw him coming? And yet it was this foreign devil who saw me kicked out on the street one day; he picked me out of the muddy gutter, he carried me home with him. I expected any minute to be stupefied and cooked up into soup or medicine."

The grandchildren giggled at Cynthia: "Just fancy!"

"But he was very gentle to me," Deacon Ding nodded, "he whittled me a pair of funny sticks called crutches to help me walk, but all this time he could not talk to me because he knew no

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Chinese. He would hold up a cup, and I would say 'cup' in Chinese; he would write it down. He touched chairs, tables, beds, chickens, books, rice, until he had a long list of my brains on paper. It made me nervous: 'If he keeps on spreading my brains on paper then I shall be stupefied!' I said. But he rubbed my poor lame back every night so that I could rest on it without pain, and while I taught him Chinese he taught me—*love*. But one day the people mobbed him, flogged him, and drove him out of town. I could tell I had been bewitched because my heart was twisted for the love of him. But years went by, and he never came. I thought he had died from our flogging. But I kept on reading his little black Book. I read it to my parents, for when I could walk they decided to take me back home. My family liked the Book. We loaned it to our neighbors. Our neighbors liked the Book. Ten years went by. When the Boxers came to town I baked the Bible in a loaf of bread in the oven to hide it, and my parents were killed for daring to have liked those words and because they were unwilling to step on the Saviour's cross. I would have been killed, too, except that I was lame again, now that I had outgrown the

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crutches. So the Boxers said, 'Just a stupid idiot man, not worth troubling about.' But when they had gone I had no family left; I asked a go-between to find me an inside person, and I got married. I read her the book so that she could be a Christian, too. We were very poor. We nearly starved."

"He had to eat soup made from corn-cobs and roots," his grandchildren sighed sympathetically.

"Yes," nodded old Deacon Ding, stroking his beard. "Well, time went on. By and by the white man came back to town with his inside person and his grown daughter. She educated my daughters. He came to sit in my home. It was like heaven. He built a church, and I was his first deacon. I have been a deacon ever since. He kept on sitting in my house, opening up his Book and telling me the wonders of his save-the-world-doctrine until heaven came down and sat also under our roof-tree, just as the Bible says, 'Thy kingdom come on earth, as in heaven.' Ten years this happened. And then, from too many journeys over swollen rivers, from too many chillings afterward, from too many preachings he grew so tired that God the Father leaned out of the real heaven and said, 'You'd better come

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home and rest with me now.' So he went home to rest. And his special chair was very empty."

"Tell what you said about it," urged his younger listeners eagerly.

"I said to my family, 'Nobody is to sit on this chair unless they are willing to be what the Honorable Teacher was.' So a long while went by, then one day I found my oldest son on that chair: 'Father, I am going to be a preacher,' he said. So sure enough, he is preaching now in another province. Then by and by my second son sat on the chair: 'Father, I would like to be a teacher.' Well, he is teaching in a Christian school. Next my daughter sat on it: 'Father, I would love to be a Christian doctor.' This was a big surprise, but she became a doctor. And when the baby grew up he, too, sat on the chair: 'Father, I'm going to be a Christian singer.' He has a fine voice for God to use. But after that there was nobody left under my rooftree to use the chair, for my children were scattered far and wide; so then I had it tied on the roof. A chair on a roof does a lot of good. It preaches sermons!"

The grandchildren smiled: "It's grandfather who preaches the sermons. You see, he can't go

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out any more, he's so crippled and lame. But people passing by the house are sure to see the chair, they come indoors to ask about it, and grandpa gets as much of an audience as he wants. But some day, when we get a little older, he says he's going to take it down and bring it indoors so that we can sit on it; provided, of course, that we decided to be God's workers. I think we will, don't you?"

You can see for yourself why this all seemed like a holy day to Cynthia. Especially when she said that night to the Plain Gray Lady, "There's one thing I've wanted to ask you all day, who *was* that missionary whose chair is on the roof?"

The Plain Gray Lady answered: "He was my father! I thought maybe you had guessed. It was on that chair that I, too, pledged my life to China."

As Cynthia wrote home to her brother Bob: "Where will you find a Hallowe'en story like this? Next Sunday tell your class about it and I think they will want to sing all the verses of

*For all Thy saints, who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest,
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"*



This is what is going to happen on the ninth day of every ninth moon in the new school of the new China Shepherd. All the boys will observe Kites' Day, and the kites will become quite hopelessly tangled; but that will be half the fun, of course!

Undoubtedly these two are Glorious Fighter and Heavenly Repose sent by their Granny to a school where even more wonderful things can come out of the sky than pantaloons—things like education and wisdom and comfort and peace.

THE
FALL
OVER
STRAW:

“Those who chase kites, fall over straws.”

“A man cannot become perfect in a hundred years; he may become corrupt in less than a day.”

“One family builds a wall and two families get the benefit of it.”

XXII

ENTER THE CHINA SHEPHERD

THE last thing that our China Shepherdess expected to meet on a Chinese street was a China Shepherd! Indeed, the first time she met him she had no least idea that he was a shepherd; and to tell the truth, he had no least idea of it himself.

He says now that he was walking along that slippery cobblestone street thinking only of kerosene-oil, when suddenly he found himself thinking only of Cynthia. For there she was! He stood and stared at her. He had never in his life seen any one like her! Because he was so large, and because the street was so narrow, he completely blocked all traffic; exactly as a certain pig had done once upon a time. And Cynthia, who had not known how in the world to get the pig out of the way, knew exactly how to deal with the man! Especially a man who wore a straw hat, a white starched collar, a brown necktie, and a Palm Beach suit.

"Excuse me," she said in her best English, and with very delicate sarcasm, "might I pass?"

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It was all so perfectly ridiculous: two Americans in a little Chinese walled city begging each other's pardon. Cynthia laughed first. Then the man laughed.

"I had no idea that there were Americans in this out-of-the-way place," he exclaimed, "are you traveling through somewhere?" He held his hat under his arm and stared down at Cynthia as if he had never seen a girl before.

"Traveling? Oh, no; just living here, thank you!" she answered. This was so unbelievable to him that she really had to ask him to come and see for himself what the school was like. He said, "Why can't I come now?"

The Plain Gray Lady soon found herself giving a very unexpected tea-party, and she really had to smile up her sleeve at several things she could not help but see on the young gentleman's face as he looked at Cynthia. "Exactly as if she were too good to be true! As if she might vanish into thin air any moment!" Whereupon she sighed deeply, wondering if Cynthia really might not vanish as far as the Heavenly Education-In-stilling School was concerned. . .

Eating sandwiches hungrily, the caller began to tell about his business: "Our oil-cans are all

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over China from the ocean to Tibet, and from north to south as well. You really ought to see the clever way the Chinese use those oil-cans when the oil is gone—they roof their houses with them, they use them for coffins for babies, they hang a can at each end of a bamboo pole, and behold! water-buckets! It's a great business—lighting China from end to end."

Cynthia smiled at his enthusiasm: "Lighting China, indeed! Why, *our* company has been lighting China before yours ever dreamed there was such a place. A little oil in a lamp isn't all the light in China, sir! How about taking a poor dull yellow Chinese face, tired and hopeless and heathen, and putting such a light behind it that mothers hardly recognize their own daughters."

"I don't q-uite understand," stammered the Oil Man apologetically.

"Let me show you!" Cynthia cried, and led him to Grandmother Gate-Woman, pointing to the old woman with much pride: "She's putting more light in this town this moment than all your oil-cans could put in a year." She showed him how the old woman was talking through the gate to the broom pedler. Then she showed him Silver Dew Drop asleep in her hammock on

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Grandmother Gate-Woman's porch. "*There's* a lamp who's getting filled at our school; a lamp that helped make your silk necktie for you, too." (He stroked his tie as if to feel what a Dew Drop had made of the job!) "And there go Five Little Peppers scampering home—more lighted lamps, brimming over with the oil of gladness. No Foolish Virgins about *them*! Let me tell you about their front door——"

The Oil Man listened eagerly.

Then Cynthia took him to Amazing Grace. "I want to show this gentleman the part of our school where we make the greatest light in town. Where will I find it?" Amazing Grace looked all around the courtyard thoughtfully, then she beckoned him to follow her. "Childrens!" she beamed in her quaint careful English. "There are nothings more lighter than little Chinese childrens; see, I make you a show of our new kindergartens. Bow, little childrens, bow!"

Fifteen plump little Blue Jackets bent in the middle and formed perfect loops of themselves to do honor to the glorious stranger. The glorious stranger wondered if they were not really dolls, their eyes were so bias, their cheeks so tan, their hair so straight in bangs. But when

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they opened their mouths and sang with all their might he knew that they were human beings.

Amazing Grace explained about them: "Chinese mamma have got one big love over her baby—'Nicer baby could not be in all China!' she boast. See? Well, give me that baby every day one little while. I put a song in him. I put a Bible in him. I put a clean wash on him. Then I send him home. My, what surprises that mamma are got over little clean-to-death baby. She must come church and find out all about this good Jesus. That make much light in this town. Very much light. See?"

But I fear that the Oil Man could see nothing on earth but Cynthia just then. Presently he told her all this; and since time was so short and China so big and his oil so necessary, could she and would she marry him please, and spend the rest of her life lighting China, in his way?

Cynthia became very pink. And then very white. But she said she was sorry—it was quite impossible. She felt that *her* way of lighting China was the only way for her! She—really—could—not—possibly—exchange—it—for—his. (The dashes are simply to show you what a dreadfully hard sentence this was to say to such

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a wonderful Oil Man. He was so very nice! He was so completely unexpected! He was everything a man should be! Except, of course, his business.)

"But you don't really mean this, do you?" he asked.

"Indeed, I do! Indeed, I do! You see, I'm an enthusiast, too. Until I came here I had no idea what the Bible meant when it said that the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light. But I found this little city full of darkness—do you suppose kerosene-oil can ever give the kind of light to take fear out of people's lives? Will it ever stop firecracker insurance? Or save front doors? Or take down kitchen gods and door gods? Will it slay dragons? Will it warm the heart that is five-jackets-cold? Or save little Mah Jong cry-babies? Or swat flies? Why, there isn't kerosene enough in all the world to make Granny's coffin seem less empty and dark! And tell me if there's a chair on any roof in China in memory of a kerosene-oil agent?"

The Oil Man shook his head. He had to go away; alone. "Good-bye, little China Shepherdess."

"Good-bye," she said. It was a very blue day

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for both of them. Also a blue week, and a blue month. The little spring went out of Cynthia's heels, the lovely violet light went out of her eyes. The Blue Belles began to worry dreadfully.

George said fiercely: "Not sick. Not cross. Not anything that pill-bottles could help, nor parties. We should pray Father God, I think." And they all prayed; hard.

One day, five months later, a little package came to Cynthia. She remembered the Christmas star which had also come in the mail and gone astray. She was glad to have this precious package safe, for inside it lay a little Dresden china shepherd, with a card: "Coming on Thursday the twelfth to marry my China Shepherdess." That was all it said. But it was quite enough. The violet came back to Cynthia's eyes. The spring came back to her heels. And on Thursday the twelfth the China Shepherd came. He was just the Oil Man, of course.

"I lost my job," he told the Plain Gray Lady before Cynthia came into the room.

"Too bad!" she sympathized. "And you were such a fine agent, I thought. However did you lose it?"

"By giving it up to enlist as a China Shep-

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herd," he answered. For would you believe it? All the sights which Cynthia had shown him to prove how she too was lighting China had made an unforgettable impression. No oil-can seemed equal to the power hidden in those little human lamps in Cynthia's care. He wrote all this to his Mission Board in America: "I don't know whether you care to take me on or not, for I'm not a preacher nor a teacher, although I've had a college education and own a Phi Beta Kappa key. Also, I'm going to marry one of your own missionaries. And here are the points in my favor."

He gave a list of all the things that he could do, adding: "You see, I'm fairly well equipped to tackle Chinese boys. I might also add that when I was a little chap myself I had to memorize whole chapters of the Bible, and to my surprise I find more evidences every day that it is a missionary book from cover to cover. Why did nobody ever tell me this before? Imagine a boy being allowed to grow up without knowing that every book in the New Testament was written by a foreign missionary! That the Acts of the Apostles are nothing more nor less than a missionary's journal! That every one of Jesus Christ's twelve

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apostles became a missionary except the one who became a traitor in order to earn thirty pieces of silver. Personally, I'm not aiming to earn any more pieces of silver by being a traitor to the biggest business on earth, the business of redemption which Jesus Christ came on earth to begin. It has just struck me forcibly that I couldn't even have sold oil in China if missionaries had not first opened up the country before me, using oil in their own homes until the Chinese wanted some for themselves. I might add that I know the Chinese language and admire the Chinese thoroughly as a patient people, reliable, friendly, industrious, and fine. Let me know if you can use me."

Let him know! Cablegrams are expensive, but that Mission Board was only too delighted to cable: "Yes. City of Clouds." For they had been trying for years to start work for boys in that walled city; and here was the very man to build their school and teach it.

Therefore the China Shepherd and the China Shepherdess started at once to build, both the school and also a little home of their own next door. Buffalo Bill deserted Two Horns and simply haunted the premises. He saw himself

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enrolled as the first scholar! But he was worried over something: "You must keep the workmen happy or they will work a magic," he warned Cynthia.

"Nonsense!" she said loftily. It was really appalling to him how careless she was about safeguarding herself. Not only in the matter of violets picked at sunset-time, but also in other matters even more risky. It was a relief to him that she had at last become a Walk Behind; for men of course had more sense. He hurried to warn the China Shepherd: "If you don't treat the workmen well they can destroy you, and your Honorable Inside Person as well."

"How's that, my boy?"

Buffalo Bill whispered in a ghostly fashion: "The minute you pay them off they will secretly draw the picture of a huge tiger on the inside of the devil screen before your front door. Well, in you walk, you and your Walk Behind; *Zip!* out will jump that tiger and gobble you both up!"

The China Shepherd tried not to laugh. "I shall be careful to treat the workmen well," he said.

Buffalo Bill heaved a sigh of relief. What a satisfaction it was to talk things over as man to

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man. He beamed broadly, showing what Cynthia called his "19-tooth-smile." "Then I have no doubt that the workmen will work a charm for you! Probably they will bury two cold chisels in your courtyard, one on each side of the front door. It's a splendid charm, because at dusk the chisels change into two horrible black-faced genii who will guard your door through all the night."

At this further display of superstition the new missionary pulled Buffalo Bill to a seat on a pile of lumber beside him. It was a five-jackets-cold day and the little fellow looked like a smoking chimney in the freezing air. "Now look here, boy, there isn't a cold chisel in all China that could save me or a chalk tiger that could hurt me. If you intend to come to my school you'll have to learn that Jesus Christ alone is a boy's best friend."

"Yes, sir," agreed Buffalo Bill as man to man. Not that he believed in the statement, but it was an immense satisfaction to have a man on the premises. Indeed, I think it was a great satisfaction to the China Shepherdess, too, as well as to her little Boughten Baby.

On the day when they moved into their little

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new house beside the school, Cynthia stood a long while looking out of the gateway along the crooked narrow street with its crooked gloomy houses. There were pedlers walking past, and beggars, and barbers, and chair-bearers, old women being trundled in wheelbarrows, rich women hidden inside sedan-chairs, poor women hobbling past on foot—an endless procession—always more pedlers, and beggars, and barbers, and chair-bearers, wheelbarrows and sedan-chairs, old persons, and little children, the unceasing stream of China's millions.

With a very special look on her face she went indoors and hung on the wall this little framed verse by Daniel Henderson; then, with the Boughten Baby in her arms, she and the China Shepherd read it aloud together, in the dusk:

HYMN FOR A HOUSEHOLD

Lord Christ, beneath Thy starry dome
We light this flickering lamp of home,
And where bewildering shadows throng
Uplift our prayer and evensong.
Dost Thou, with heaven in Thy ken,
Seek still a dwelling-place with men,
Wandering the world in ceaseless quest?
O Man of Nazareth, be our guest!

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Lord Christ, the bird his nest has found,
The fox is sheltered in his ground,
But dost Thou still this dark earth tread
And have no place to lay Thy head?
Shepherd of mortals, here behold
A little flock, a wayside fold
That wait Thy presence to be blest—
O Man of Nazareth, be our guest!

THE END.

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